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HISTORY OF  
NATRONA COUNTY  
WYOMING









*C. J. Mokler*



History of  
NATRONA COUNTY  
WYOMING  
1888-1922

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True Portrayal of the Yesterdays of a New  
County and a Typical Frontier Town  
of the Middle West. Fortunes and Mis-  
fortunes, Tragedies and Comedies,  
Struggles and Triumphs of the Pioneers

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*Map and Illustrations*

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BY

ALFRED JAMES MOKLER

*Publisher of the Natrona County Tribune from  
June 1, 1897, to October 15, 1914*

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1923

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## Foreword

TO SEE Natrona county grow from the smallest in point of assessed valuation to the very highest of any county in the state of Wyoming, to see Casper rise from a frontier village, with a population of less than five hundred to a progressive city of twenty-seven thousand, to see our resources developed from almost nothing to a stage that supplies the product for factories and refineries that cost more than thirty millions of dollars, where more than three thousand men are employed, and to worthily record the events that have occurred in these years is the author's pride, and to be familiar with them is the duty, and should be the delight of every patriotic citizen.

In presenting this work the author's aim is to supply the demand for a true portrayal of a great and eventful period of more than three decades, wherein the progress has been most exciting and dramatic. What struggles and triumphs, what discoveries and revelations, what disasters and reforms, what tragedies and comedies have characterized the wonderful advance since the first tent was put up where the city of Casper is situated and since Natrona county was organized. This work is not a mere history, for it contains details of commonplace occurrences and graphic descriptions of everything notable that has occurred since Casper was a mere village and since Natrona was organized as a county. The pages are filled with the most interesting and useful material for reference, illustration, entertainment and instruction, and in the fullest sense is stimulating, romantic, true.

More than three laborious years have been devoted to the preparation of this work, and the author has obtained rare and valuable information hitherto inaccessible. County and city records, libraries, private diaries, newspapers and journals of the pioneers are the sources of the author's information. From eye witnesses and participants in thrilling scenes have been secured interesting facts never before in print, and the work may be relied upon as authority upon all subjects of which it treats. The illustrations are rare and of a value beyond financial consideration, and many of the en-

gravings will convey a clearer idea of some of the subjects than a whole volume of words. Bias or prejudice and a garbled version made of distorted fact and malicious gossip are not included in these pages, but details, events and incidents are recorded as nearly correct as has been possible to obtain them.

To the pioneers and the others who have adopted Natrona county as their dwelling place, the author has the honor to dedicate this work.

## Preface

THERE is no place in the great Middle West more replete with interesting history than Central Wyoming and Natrona county. It was in this part of the country that John Colter, in 1808, while trapping along the streams and wandering over the plains, had thrilling experiences with the Indians that seem almost incredible; it was here that Robert Stuart, in 1812, with his small party of men, who, after traveling for many months through the mountains and over the plains, on their way from the Columbia river to Saint Louis, and having been overtaken with early winter, put up the first white man's cabin that was built in what is now the state of Wyoming; it was here that General Ashley, in 1823-4, explored the Big Horn mountains and the Sweetwater valley and gave its name to the "Sweetwater" river; it was here that Captain Bonneville, in 1832, spent much of his time in his most interesting explorations, which are so ably described by Washington Irving; it was here that Father DeSmet, in 1840, spread the gospel among the Indians and trappers, and through his goodness no doubt averted many a clash between the red man and the whites. This great man chiseled his name on Independence Rock, which he gave the name, "The Register of the Desert"; it was here that John C. Fremont, "The Pathfinder," in 1842, with Kit Carson as his guide, explored the country along the Platte and Sweetwater rivers, and finally ascended one of the highest peaks in the Wind River range that bears his name, and from this lofty peak discovered the lake that was then named and since bears the name of Fremont lake; he, too, chiseled his name on Independence Rock. And after Fremont came the sturdy pioneers in 1843-8 to settle the Oregon Country; in 1847-55 the Mormons passed through to the Great Salt Lake country; in 1849-55 the California gold seekers passed over the well-worn trail; and up until 1869 the emigrants and homeseekers, by the thousands upon thousands, traveled from the extreme east to the west end of the county on their westward journey, many of whom experienced hair-breadth escapes and bloody encounters with wild beasts and hostile Indians;



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## Organization of Wyoming as a Territory and State

**W**YOMING derived its name from the historic Wyoming valley of Pennsylvania and is supposed to be a corruption of the Indian name Maughwauwame, meaning in the Indian language Large Plains. With the state 365 miles in length by 276 miles in width, making an area of 97,883 square miles, its surface is equal to the states of New York and Pennsylvania. Part of Wyoming, west of the Rocky mountains, was included in the Oregon Country and belonged to Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Idaho. The lower Green River country, about Fort Bridger, pertained to Mexico and became American soil after the treaty of 1848. Most of Wyoming was included in the Province of Louisiana, purchased from the French in 1804, the Territory of Louisiana after 1805, the Territory of Missouri after 1812, the Indian Country after 1834, Nebraska after 1854, Dakota after 1861, Idaho after 1863, and Dakota again after 1864. To Dakota, therefore, our earliest pioneers looked for what little law and justice was given them; and it was the rule, rather than the exception, that citizens at this long distance from the seat of government waited either very long or else hopelessly for even such little satisfaction as might be given by law. More revenue was gained by the territorial treasury from this isolated section than from all of eastern Dakota, while the taxation here laid by the United States aggregated very handsome amounts. In 1868, however, a new era was inaugurated, and the enterprising settlers who laid the foundation for our new state made vigorous efforts to secure an organization nearer home. These were baffled until July 25, 1868, when the act to provide a temporary government for the "Territory of Wyoming" became a law.<sup>1</sup> The boundaries designated for the foundling were the forty-first and forty-fifth degrees of north latitude and the twenty-seventh and thirty-fourth meridians of longitude west from Washington. This gave the territory the generous dimensions of 365 miles in length by 276 miles in breadth, and, besides taking a large proportion of Dakota's domain, carved smaller areas from Colorado and Utah.

Federal appointments for nearly all officers were made during April, 1869, and on the 10th of May following the new government

<sup>1</sup> "Hand Book of the Territory of Wyoming," Robert E. Strathorn, 1877.

was in complete working order, with Cheyenne as the capital. The gentlemen who first filled positions of trust were: J. A. Campbell, governor; Edward M. Lee, secretary; Church Howe, marshal; J. M. Carey, United States attorney; John M. Howe, chief justice; J. W. Bingham and W. S. Jones, associate justices; C. D. Ruger, surveyor general; Frank Wolcott, receiver public land office.

The first legislative assembly in Wyoming was organized at Cheyenne October 12, 1869, with Wm. H. Bright as president of the council, and S. M. Curran, speaker of the house. The legislature adjourned *sine die* on the 10th of December, after having given the first laws that were considered really binding by the people of this section. Succeeding sessions have been held biennially, meeting, according to enactment, on the second Tuesday of January of each alternate year.

The following is the official count of the elections for delegate to congress in the Territory of Wyoming from 1869 to 1876.

Counties	1869		1870		1872		1874		1876	
	Corlett Rep.	Nuckolls Dem.	Jones Rep.	Wanlers Dem.	Jones Rep.	Steele Dem.	Carey Rep.	Steele Dem.	Corlett Rep.	Steele Dem.
Albany.....	320	515	428	369	359	563	555	699	1010	533
Carbon.....	190	389	150	183	79	261	282	363	529	407
Laramie.....	722	886	398	380	518	572	677	881	1242	940
Sweetwater.....	593	862	363	279	399	186	306	406	496	423
Uinta.....	138	679	327	228	116	160	584	657	587	457
Totals.....	1963	3331	1666	1439	1471	1742	2404	3006	3864	2760
Majority.....		1368	227			271		606	1104	
Whole vote (including scattering).....	5,266		3,202		3,213		5,404		6,626	

The vote of 1869 was greatly out of proportion to the permanent population on account of the great many people who were in the new railroad towns along the Union Pacific railway, which at that time had just been completed. This floating population disappeared with the flush times of the earliest days, and it was 1874 before a permanent population was brought up to the figures of '69.

The act approved by President Benjamin Harrison at 5:30 p.m., July 10, 1890, under which the state of Wyoming was admitted into the Union, consists of twenty-one sections, introduced by the following preamble:

"Whereas, The people of the Territory of Wyoming did, on the 30th day of September, 1889, by a convention of delegates called and assembled for that purpose, form for themselves a constitution, which constitution was ratified and adopted by the people of said territory at the election held therefor on the first Tuesday in November, 1889, which constitution is republican in form and is in conformity with the Constitution of the United States; and

"Whereas, Said convention and the people of said territory have asked the admission of said territory into the Union of states on an equal footing with the original states in all respects whatever; therefore, be it enacted,

"Section 1. That the state of Wyoming is hereby declared to be a state of the United States of America, and is hereby declared admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original states in all respects whatever; and that the constitution which the people of Wyoming have formed for themselves be, and the same is hereby accepted, ratified, and confirmed."

Section 2 defines the boundaries, which are the same as at the present time; section 3 fixes the representation in congress as two senators and one member of the house of representatives; section 4 sets apart the sections of land numbered 16 and 36 in each township for the support of a public school system; section 5 relates to the same subject; section 6 grants "fifty sections of the unappropriated public lands within the state for the purpose of erecting public buildings at the capital," etc.; section 7 donates 5 per cent of the proceeds of all sales of public lands within the state to the school fund; sections 8 to 11 relate to the land grants under previous acts of legislation, for the penitentiary, fish hatchery and agricultural college, etc., to-wit: For the insane asylum in Uinta county, 30,000 acres; for the penal, reform, and educational institution in course of construction in Carbon county, 30,000 acres; for the penitentiary in Albany county, 30,000 acres; for the fish hatchery in Albany county, 5,000 acres; for the deaf, dumb, and blind asylum in Laramie county, 10,000 acres; for the poor farm in Fremont county, 10,000 acres; for the miners' hospital in Sweetwater county, 30,000 acres; for public buildings at the capital, 75,000 acres; and for state charitable, penal and reformatory institutions, 260,000 acres, making a total of 500,000 acres, in addition to the specific land grants already mentioned. The act also contains a provision that none of the lands granted should be sold for less than ten dollars an acre.

The next three sections prescribe the manner in which all lands granted to the state should be selected. Section 15 appropriated \$3,000 to defray the expenses of the constitutional convention.

Sections 16, 17, and 18 provide for the establishment of a United States district court for Wyoming, and fix the time and place of holding terms of the United States district and circuit courts. Section 19 relates to the election of United States senators, and the last two sections authorize the territorial officials to remain in office until a state election could be held, and declare that the laws of the United States shall apply to the state of Wyoming.

The following table exhibiting the population and assessed valuation of the five original counties of the territory in 1870 and 1877, which is compiled from the official returns, will be of interest:

Counties	POPULATION		ASSESSED VALUATION	
	1870	1877	1870	1877
Albany.....	2,500	8,500	\$ 593,547	\$ 2,500,000
Carbon.....	2,000	2,500	1,731,418	1,900,000
Laramie.....	4,000	9,500	1,397,771	3,000,000
Sweetwater.....	4,500	3,500	1,840,120	1,918,449
Uinta.....	1,750	4,500	1,900,000	2,500,000
Total.....	14,750	28,500	\$7,462,856	\$11,818,449

With Natrona county's assessed valuation in 1921 of \$61,070,426, it will be observed that this county alone now has more than five times the assessed valuation that the whole Territory of Wyoming had in 1877, and it is more than eight times greater than the whole territory was assessed at in 1870.

The territorial governors of Wyoming were appointed by the president of the United States, and in 1869, when Wyoming became a territory, President U. S. Grant appointed John A. Campbell our first governor. Mr. Campbell served as governor of the new territory until 1875, when he resigned and John M. Thayer was appointed and served until 1878. John W. Hoyt was the third governor, whose term was from 1878 to 1882. William Hale served from 1882 until 1885, and died while in office. Francis E. Warren succeeded Mr. Hale and served from 1885 to 1886. George E. Baxter was appointed in November, 1886, and served until December of that year, when Thomas Moonlight was appointed and served until 1889. Francis E. Warren was again appointed in 1889, and upon the organization of the state government was elected its first governor, assuming the office under the state organization October 11, 1890. Having been elected United States senator he resigned and was succeeded by Amos W. Barber, then secretary of state, as acting governor on November 24, 1890. At the election held in November, 1892, John E. Osborne was elected governor to complete the original term of Governor Warren. William

A. Richards was elected governor in November, 1894, assuming office in January, 1895, and served the four-year term. DeForest Richards was elected chief executive in 1898, taking the oath in January, 1899. He was re-elected in 1902, assuming office in January, 1903. Governor Richards served but a few months of his second term when death overtook him and Fenimore Chatterton, secretary of state, became acting governor. In the election of 1904 Bryant B. Brooks was chosen to complete the term of Governor Richards. In 1906 Governor Brooks was chosen his own successor, for the regular term. Joseph M. Carey was elected in 1910 and was inaugurated in January, 1911. John B. Kendrick was elected in 1914 and became governor in January, 1915. In the campaign of 1916 he was elected United States senator, resigning the governorship February 26, 1917. Frank L. Houx, by virtue of his office of secretary of state, became acting governor on the same date. At the gubernatorial election November, 1918, Robert D. Carey was elected and took office January, 1919, and served until January, 1923. William B. Ross was the people's choice at the general election held in November, 1922, and was inaugurated January 1, 1923.

## Organization of Natrona County

THE first step toward the segregation of Carbon county and the establishment of a new county to be known as Natrona was taken when a bill was presented in the Wyoming territorial legislature in 1888, entitled: "An act making divers appropriations, and for other purposes." The act, after being passed by the legislature and engrossed, was presented to Governor Moonlight for his signature, but instead of signing the bill, the governor promptly vetoed it, and when it was returned to the legislative halls with his disapproval, the members of the legislature just as promptly passed the bill over the governor's veto.

The next step taken in behalf of the new county was during the latter months of 1888, when a petition was circulated and signed by about two-thirds of the people living in the northern part of Carbon county (now Natrona county). The petition requested Governor Moonlight to appoint Jacob E. Ervay, Nathan S. Bristol and Bryant B. Brooks as temporary commissioners for the purpose of organizing the new county. The segregation would divide Carbon county near the center by a line running east and west, thus giving Natrona county an area of about 5,500 square miles, or seventy-five miles square, the area of Carbon county at that time being 170 miles long and seventy-five miles wide.

The petition, containing nearly 300 names, was carried from Casper to Cheyenne by Attorney C. C. Wright on January 31, 1889, and was formally presented to the governor. A man named McCoy, who was at that time booming the townsite of Bothwell, in the Sweetwater country, and who had been in the county less than three months, made the trip to Cheyenne for the purpose of filing a remonstrance with the governor, objecting to the three commissioners being appointed, and he filed affidavits to the effect that many of the petitioners were not legal residents of the county, and therefore, the petition should not be considered by the governor.

Governor Moonlight, after the petition and remonstrance had been presented, announced that he would keep the matter open for eighteen days, in order that further evidence and argument might be produced for and against the commissioners being appointed, and after the eighteen days expired he would require eight days more to review the evidence and render a decision.



# Map of NATRONA COUNTY Wyoming

Compiled from  
Government and State Bulletins, local Records and Surveys

by  
**WHEELER & WORTHINGTON**

Civil Engineers  
Map Makers Blue Printers  
Casper, Wyo.

SCALE

1 MILE = 1.609 KM

LEGEND

Contour Lines  
 Section Corners  
 Township and Range Lines  
 Railroads  
 Rivers and Streams  
 Lakes and Ponds  
 Townships  
 Towns  
 Farms  
 Unimproved Land





On February 26, 1889, the governor gave notice that he would not appoint the temporary commissioners as requested by the petitioners, and from this decree there was no appeal. Thus the organization of Natrona county was delayed for the time being.

Governor Moonlight was removed from office in about thirty days after he vetoed the petition, and on March 22, 1889, President Benjamin Harrison appointed Francis E. Warren as governor of the Territory of Wyoming. Then the people of the northern part of Carbon county again circulated a petition praying that Governor Warren appoint George Mitchell, Bryant B. Brooks, and Jacob E. Ervay as commissioners to act in the organization of the county of Natrona. Mr. Bristol declined the honor of having his name on the second petition. In due time the petition was presented to Governor Warren, and on March 3, 1890, the governor made the appointments as requested in the petition.

The boundaries of Natrona county, at the time the bill was enacted by the territorial legislature, which have been changed but little since, were defined as follows:

"Commencing at a point on the seventh standard parallel north, at its intersection with the western boundary line of the present county of Albany; thence west along said standard parallel to its intersection with the west boundary line of the present county of Carbon; thence north along said last described boundary line to the southern boundary line of the present county of Johnson; thence east along said boundary line of Johnson county to the northwestern corner of the present county of Albany; thence south along the western boundary line of said county of Albany to the place of beginning; being all that portion of the present county of Carbon, Territory of Wyoming, lying north of the seventh standard parallel north."

Natrona county derives its name from the natural deposits of natrum or carbonate of soda, which is found in the numerous basins and lakes that abound in the central part of the state. Judge Charles E. Blydenburgh of Rawlins suggested the name "Natrona" as the thirteenth county of Wyoming.

Carbon, our mother county, was one of the original five counties of the Territory of Wyoming, and was organized by legislative enactment in November, 1869.

Carbon county originally included all that portion of the Territory of Wyoming lying between a point on the Union Pacific railway one-half mile east of Aurora station on the east, and the 107th degree and 30 minutes west longitude on the west, and the north and south boundary lines of the territory. The area of the land embraced was 22,080 square miles, thirty square miles more than are included

in the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. In 1879 Carbon county was divided on the parallel of 43 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude, and the north portion was organized under the name of Pease, but was later changed to Johnson county. After this division Carbon county was reduced in land area to 12,816 square miles. Reduced to acres the county contained 8,783,040 acres of land. Its population in 1877, before Johnson county was segregated, was given as 2,500 and its assessed valuation was \$1,900,000. With the two divisions of Carbon county that have been made from its original area, Natrona is left in the center of the old county, Johnson being to our north and Carbon to the south. Sheridan county was organized from part of Johnson in 1887, and Big Horn county was organized from part of Johnson in 1897.

The beautiful valleys of the Sweetwater, Powder and North Platte rivers and the numerous small streams in Natrona county, and the contiguous plains, largely visited by the warm winds from the shores of the Pacific ocean, make this region one of the most desirable locations on this continent. The valleys in this section are so protected by mountain ranges on the immediate south and west that it is signally exempt from the perilous storms which make winter so dangerous and destructive to livestock in the north and east, and the dreadful blizzards which sweep a considerable portion of the United States during the winter months do not reach this section to any appreciable extent.

The commissioners appointed by Governor Warren took the oath of office on March 5, 1890, before R. H. Wilbur, a justice of the peace residing in Casper. Immediately after the oath of office was administered, the commissioners designated Casper, in the unorganized county of Natrona, as the place to hold its meetings. The first regular meeting of the new commissioners was held on the 5th day of March, 1890, at 4 o'clock p. m., in the office of the Wyoming Lumber company, George Mitchell being president of the lumber company, and the office was located where the Nicolaysen Lumber company yards are now located. At this meeting Bryant B. Brooks was chosen chairman of the board, George Mitchell, secretary, and F. H. Harvey was appointed attorney for the board. The commissioners then established voting precincts and appointed judges of election for each voting precinct as follows:

Casper precinct — Joel J. Hurt, J. A. Casebeer, R. H. Wilbur.

Muddy precinct — C. C. P. Webel, Edward Beach, James Milne.

Bessemer precinct — Rufus Rhoades, G. W. Johnson, G. C. Riggles.

Bates Hole precinct — Joseph Bowie, M. Benedict, Jacob Crouse.

Sweetwater precinct—H. C. Wilson, Daniel Fitger, J. H. Omstead.

Durbin precinct — LaFayette Griffin, Wm. Hunt, Samuel Johnson.

Ervay precinct — J. J. Holliday, D. P. Smith, John F. Landon.

The board ordered that an election be held within the unorganized county of Natrona, on the 8th day of April, 1890, for the purpose of electing all county and precinct officers of the said county of Natrona, and for the selection of a county seat for the said county.

The notice of the election was ordered published in the *Casper Weekly Mail*, the first paper published in Casper, and the only one published here at that time.

The next exciting event was the county election, held April 8, 1890, and the selection of the county seat was the big drawing card of the day. The contest for the county seat was between Casper and Bessemer from the very moment that it was officially declared that there was to be a Natrona county, and after the smoke of battle had cleared away it was learned that in the entire county Bessemer had received 731 votes, against 353 for Casper. It was claimed by both sides that a great many fraudulent votes had been cast, but it was very evident when the commissioners met to canvass the returns, that Bessemer "overplayed her hand," and the entire vote from that precinct, for the county seat, as well as for all the county officers, was thrown out on the official count, the commissioners reporting that "The official returns from Bessemer made to the board of commissioners, upon being opened, were found to be grossly irregular, no official summary or return being made, or certified to in the poll book, as required by law, nor was the tally list signed or certified to or identified in the manner provided by law, and it is therefore, upon motion, ordered that the said returns from Bessemer voting place be not considered or counted in the canvass."

The vote on the county officers and upon the seat of the county government from all the other precincts of the county excepting Bessemer, gave the following totals:

Sheriff — W. W. Jaycox, 241; Oliver M. Rice, 177.

County Clerk and ex-Officio Register of Deeds—Peter O'Malley, 226; George Mitchell, 193.

Judge of Probate and County Treasurer — Bryant B. Brooks, 175; John McGrath, 241.

County and Prosecuting Attorney — Alex T. Butler, 176; C. C. Wright, 218.

County Commissioners — C. C. P. Webel, 212; A. McKinney, 339; S. A. Aggers, 224; John Greenlaw, 154; J. P. Smith, 218; I. N. Speer, 99.

County Superintendent of Schools — Cordelia M. Cheney, 415;  
Cora Cantlin, 1.

Coroner — Joe Benson, 1; A. P. Haynes, 267; D. L. Clark, 3;  
R. J. Marsch, 2.

Surveyor — J. B. Bradley, 273; Chris Baysel, 145.

Assessor — E. L. McGraugh, 202; Allen Cox, 82; William Clark,  
131.

Justice of the Peace — Fred E. Place, 35; R. H. Wilbur, 284;  
Ida M. Richards, 2.

Constable — Hugh Patton, 282; Jacob Crouse, 18; Norman  
Calmon, 23.

County Seat — Casper, 353; Bessemer, 64.

The board of county commissioners, consisting of A. McKinney, S. A. Aggers and J. P. Smith, met in regular session on April 12, and after perfecting their organization, thereupon issued a proclamation which declared that "the county commissioners, the sheriff, the county clerk and ex-officio register of deeds, and the judge of probate and county treasurer, having each severally received certificates of election, and having each duly qualified according to law, did then and there enter upon the duties of their said offices, respectively, and the county of Natrona, Territory of Wyoming, was declared duly and regularly organized."

At this same meeting the board of county commissioners leased three rooms in the second story of White & Co.'s building, to be used as county offices, at \$450 annually. These are the front rooms in the building on Center street the second door south from Second street, on the west side of the street, which for many years were occupied by the Grand Central hotel.

But little business was transacted by the board of county commissioners at its first meeting held April 12, except to provide for rooms for the county officers, but on May 5 a contract was made with the board of county commissioners of Converse county "to take and care for any prisoners from Natrona county at the rate of one dollar per day in United States currency for each prisoner, the bills to be paid monthly." On the same date the county clerk was instructed to make an order for the county superintendent of schools to establish the school districts of Natrona county which were to be a part of the records of said county. This was all the business of importance transacted at this meeting. At the meeting of June 3, the board passed a resolution to the effect "that the Casper-Bates Hole road is of sufficient importance to be opened and traveled, therefore, it is ordered that the said road be and the same is hereby established." O. M. Rice was appointed road overseer for the new county. A grand



jury was selected at the meeting held July 7, and it was the duty of this grand jury to select a list of sixty names to serve as petit jurors at the term of the district court.

The Casper-Muddy road was established October 9, 1890, "commencing at the town of Casper and running in an easterly direction to a point just east of J. A. Stroud's ranch, thence on the road now traveled in a southeasterly direction to John Greenlaw's ranch, thence in an easterly direction to a pass in the hills about one fourth of a mile south of the old traveled road and about one-half a mile west of the TAX ranch, connecting with the said old road about 100 feet above and north of the first bridge on Dry Muddy creek west of said TAX ranch, thence following the old road in an easterly direction to the top of the hill, thence in a southeasterly direction as far as the southwest corner of the OK ranch, thence in an easterly direction to the northwest corner of the Hines and Jaycox ranch on West Muddy, crossing said West Muddy close to Hines and Jaycox ranch, thence southeasterly to a point about one-fourth of a mile from said crossing of West Muddy, thence in an easterly direction to the county line, crossing the Main Muddy creek, on section line between C. C. P. Webel's ranch and the Lajaunesse ranch, immediately south, terminating at the county line."

The second election to occur in Natrona county was held on September 11, 1890. The republican ticket nominated was: Sheriff, Harry Biggs; clerk, Peter O'Malley; treasurer, W. A. Denecke; attorney, A. T. Butler; clerk of court, C. W. Wixey; commissioners, B. B. Brooks, P. A. Demorest, Fred E. Place; assessor, Samuel A. Aggers; surveyor, J. B. Bradley; coroner, H. A. Lilly; superintendent schools, Cordelia M. Cheney; justices of peace, R. H. Wilbur and G. E. Butler. The democrats nominated for sheriff, W. W. Jaycox; clerk, Laura E. Stroud; treasurer, John McGrath; attorney, Carl C. Wright; clerk of court, George Mitchell; commissioners, S. C. Leach, J. P. Smith, A. W. Jones; assessor, E. L. McGraugh; surveyor, Chris Baysel; coroner, A. P. Haynes; superintendent schools, Cordelia M. Cheney; justices of peace, J. J. Corbett and Robert Parks. The ticket elected was about evenly divided among the republicans and democrats, the successful candidates being: W. W. Jaycox, sheriff; Peter O'Malley, clerk; John McGrath, treasurer; George Mitchell, clerk of court; B. B. Brooks, Fred E. Place, J. P. Smith, commissioners; E. L. McGraugh, assessor; J. B. Bradley, surveyor; H. A. Lilly, coroner; Cordelia M. Cheney, superintendent of schools; R. H. Wilbur, and G. E. Butler, justices of the peace. W. F. Dunn was elected on the republican ticket as joint representative to the state legislature from Natrona and Carbon counties.

Mr. Dunn was the first man from Casper to be elected to that position of honor.

On account of the regular election, as provided by the state law, occurring in September of this year, Natrona county's first set of officers was in charge of affairs only from April 9 to December 31.

In November, 1890, the business in the county clerk's office had increased to such extent as to make it impossible for one man to do it justice, and, with the sanction of the county commissioners, County Clerk O'Malley appointed J. B. Bradley deputy county clerk.

Nothing of importance was transacted by the county commissioners since their meeting in November until the first meeting in January, when the newly-elected county officers were sworn in. At this meeting, January 2, 1891, judgment against Natrona county in favor of Carbon county in the sum of \$15,565.71, with interest at the rate of 8 per cent from April 8, 1890, as adjusting debt, was assumed by this county.

On February 10, 1891, a special jail fund was created for the purpose of paying for the keeping of committed prisoners and it was, "Resolved that all funds derived from the county clerk's office for the months of January, February, and March, 1891, be carried to the jail fund and the county treasurer is hereby instructed to place to the credit of said jail fund all moneys paid him for the months of January, February, and March by the county clerk." There was now in the county clerk's office \$152.80 which was the earnings for the month of January, 1891. This was ordered covered into the county treasury and to be applied on the jail fund. George Mitchell was confirmed as clerk of the district court on February 11, 1891, by Judge J. W. Blake.

Early in the spring of 1891, William W. Jaycox, who had served as sheriff of Natrona county since its organization and was twice elected to that office, and without resigning from the office or saying good bye to his friends, changed his place of residence. His bondsmen immediately made application to be released, and the county commissioners, having announced that inasmuch as the "said Jaycox had fled the state and left no one in charge of public affairs, the office of sheriff is declared vacant and the bondsmen are discharged from further liability as surety of the said Jaycox as sheriff." Jaycox was an exceptionally good officer and his financial affairs were all straight, but domestic trouble caused him to "flee" from the state. O. M. Rice was appointed sheriff by the board of county commissioners to fill the unexpired term.

Dr. W. W. Miller was on May 4, 1891, appointed physician and surgeon for the county at a salary of \$125 a year.



B. S. Ross was allowed \$2,517.20 for making the transcript of the county. On July 7, 1891, the county was bonded for \$23,000 to pay the Carbon county indebtedness and other accumulated indebtedness. The county was without funds at this time and the fact caused some of the alarmists considerable uneasiness. There were no improvements made or bills contracted except those that were absolutely necessary. By strict economy the county was soon "on its feet," and in commenting on our financial condition, the local newspaper in January, 1892, said:

"Natrona county is now not quite two years old. It sprung into life under the most adverse circumstances and many people predicted that its course would be brief and that bankruptcy would be its ultimate end. Yet today there are few counties in the state in better financial condition. It begins the new year with a balance of \$5,271 on hand, all bills have been paid up to the fifth of the month and our warrants are sold on the market for ninety-five cents on the dollar. Several large herds of cattle have left our county during the past two years, but in their place have come small ranchmen with small herds, so that the number of head has been but slightly decreased while the additional number of improved ranches makes up the sum of our revenue. Our mineral resources<sup>1</sup> have been developed and received an impetus such as has not been known before in the history of the state. We are witnessing the dawn of a glorious day."

The road from Casper to the Sweetwater country was established at the meeting of the board of county commissioners held on July 5, 1892. The soda lakes near Independence Rock were the incentive for the expenditure of a considerable amount of money to put this road in good repair. At this same meeting, the Lost Cabin road from Casper was also established. The establishment of county roads was about the most important business to come before the board of county commissioners in those days.

The building of a jail for the county and the town of Casper was a subject that taxed the minds of the officials considerably at this time. The town was progressive; a town hall had already been built and the town council had devised ways and means to build a jail to replace the one that Dr. Joe Benson had caused to be destroyed by fire. The proposition was for the town and county to build a union jail to cost about \$4,000, the town to pay half and the county to pay half, and on July 27, 1892, the county accepted a proposition from the town of Casper for the building of a union jail by adopting the following resolution:

"Whereas, The county of Natrona has no jail or place to confine its prisoners, and it is hereby adjudged and considered that the best interests of Natrona county will be served by accepting the proposition of said town of Casper, and the same is hereby accepted

<sup>1</sup> The gold, silver, copper, galena, and asbestos mines on Casper mountain were in the height of activity at that time.

and approved, and the county treasurer in and for said county is hereby authorized, empowered and a copy of this order shall be his authority for doing so, to pay over out of the money remaining from the sale of county bonds to the said town of Casper for the uses of said jail the sum of \$2,000 whenever the said town of Casper shall execute to Natrona county a bond in the sum of \$4,000 for the building and completion of said jail." The bond was furnished by the town on December 5 and was accepted by the county commissioners, and an agreement was entered into for a union town and county jail. On April 4, 1893, the building was completed and accepted and the contractors paid. The prisoners of the town and county were then relieved of the inconvenience of being transported to Douglas for safe keeping and back to Casper for trial by court, and the town and county were relieved of the expense of taking them to and from Douglas. This union jail was the brick and stone building which stood in the old court house square, immediately in the rear of the new fire house and municipal garage on the west side of David street, between Yellowstone Highway and Midwest avenue. It was torn down late in the fall of 1921. Many noted criminals, such as horse thieves, bank robbers, postoffice robbers, cattle thieves, murderers, and other desperate men, had been lodged in this jail, among them being old Chief Red Cloud, who is said to have caused the death of more white men than any other human being in this part of the country. If the old walls could have talked and revealed the thoughts of some of the men who had been confined there, what a story they could have told.

The public road to the Alcova hot springs was established April 6, 1894, and on the same date a contract was entered into with C. R. Countryman to build a bridge across the Sweetwater river at Independence Rock for \$267.92, the county to furnish the material.

The business of the county steadily increased year after year until the need of a new court house was felt, and at the meeting of the board of county commissioners held in May, 1895, it was decided to put up a new court house on the land recently acquired by the county. The building was described as "twenty-four by thirty-six feet, two stories, frame, covered with standing seam iron; a large brick vault eight by twelve feet." The contract for the masonry work was awarded to W. F. McMillen for \$227 and the carpenter work to E. Erben for \$250. The new building was finished the latter part of June and was occupied by the county officers the first week in July, 1895. This building was in the same block with the union town and county jail and at that time was considered a creditable building for the housing of the county officers. It was used for that

purpose until March 13, 1909, when the new court house on Center and A streets was occupied. At a meeting held on August 2, 1895, Chairman Charles K. Bucknum was appointed a committee of one to purchase material to enclose the ground of lots 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 15, 27, 28, 31, 39 and 40, in block one, which had been acquired for court house purposes.

The bridge across the Platte river at Alcova, owned by the Alcova Hot Springs company, was on July 6, 1897, declared to be in a dangerous and unsafe condition and that loss to life and property might ensue should the structure be allowed to stand. It was therefore condemned and ordered removed within thirty days or the county would remove it as provided by law.

The resignation of H. L. Patton as sheriff of Natrona county on June 7, 1898, was accepted and O. M. Rice was appointed by the board of county commissioners to fill the vacancy. Mr. Patton resigned in order to enlist with the Torrey Rough Riders in the Spanish-American war.

Ed Crapon was appointed county assessor for Natrona county January 3, 1900. The salary was \$650, and it required about three months to do the work. After this year the assessor was elected every two years the same as other county officers and the salary was increased to \$125 per month.

The foregoing is a brief résumé of the most important work done by the county officers for the first ten years of the county's organization. Details have been gone into for the purpose of making a comparison of how the business was transacted in those days and how it is transacted at the present time, as well as to show how we have builded up from the smallest county in Wyoming, both in population and wealth, to the most populous and richest in the state.

On the page following will be found a list of the county officers, and the dates upon which they served, from 1890 to 1923, inclusive:

Apr., 1890—Dec. 31, 1890		1891-1892	1893-1894	1895-1896
County Clerk.....	Peter O'Malley	Peter O'Malley	Peter O'Malley	Peter O'Malley
County Treasurer...	John McGrath	John McGrath	John McGrath	W. F. Dunn
Sheriff.....	W. W. Jaycox	W. W. Jaycox <sup>1</sup>	Oliver M. Rice	H. L. Patton
Clerk of Court.....	George Mitchell	George Mitchell	John F. Heagney	M. P. Wheeler
Commissioner.....	A. McKinney	J. P. Smith	A. W. Jones	C. K. Bucknum
Commissioner.....	S. A. Aggers	B. B. Brooks	Robt. White	Ed. S. White
Commissioner.....	J. P. Smith	F. E. Place	G. S. Martin	Okley K. Garvey
County Supt.....	Cordelia M. Cheney	Cordelia M. Cheney	Florence Kennedy	Wilhelmina Clark
County Assessor....	E. L. McGraugh	E. L. McGraugh	E. L. McGraugh	Daniel R. Fitger
Constable.....	H. L. Patton	.....	John McClure	E. A. Johnson
Prosecuting Att'y....	C. C. Wright	Alex. T. Butler	Geo. B. McCalmont	Geo. S. Walker
Coroner.....	A. P. Haynes	.....	Mathew Campfield	Mathew Campfield
County Surveyor....	J. B. Bradley	J. B. Bradley	J. B. Bradley	J. B. Bradley
Justice of Peace....	R. H. Wilbur	R. H. Wilbur	J. B. Smith	Jas. Ford
1897-1898		1899-1900	1901-1902	1903-1904
County Clerk.....	M. P. Wheeler	Marion P. Wheeler	Marion P. Wheeler	Marion P. Wheeler
County Treasurer...	Frank Bull	Frank Bull	Oscar Hiestand	Oscar Hiestand
Sheriff.....	H. L. Patton <sup>2</sup>	Oscar Hiestand	W. C. Ricker	Frank K. Webb
Clerk of Court.....	M. P. Wheeler	Marion P. Wheeler	M. P. Wheeler	M. P. Wheeler
Commissioner.....	J. W. Price	P. C. Nicolaysen	P. C. Nicolaysen	T. S. Steed
Commissioner.....	L. C. Morrison	Wm. Jones	D. D. Crum	E. L. McGraugh
Commissioner.....	J. P. Smith	David Kidd	Jake Crouse	P. C. Nicolaysen
County Supt.....	Wilhelmina Clark	James L. Craig	May Hamilton	May Hamilton
County Assessor....	Frank Bull	Ed. Crapon, 1900	D. P. Smith	D. P. Smith
Constable.....	E. A. Johnson	E. A. Johnson	.....	.....
Prosecuting Att'y....	Eugene D. Norton	Alex. T. Butler	Alex. T. Butler	John M. Hench
County Surveyor....	J. B. Bradley	Edward Kropp	A. Hemingway	J. B. Bradley
Justice of Peace....	H. A. Lilly	Frank Jameson	Frank Jameson	Frank Jameson
1905-1906		1907-1908	1909-1910	1911-1912
County Clerk.....	E. B. Shaffner	F. H. Sawyer	F. H. Sawyer	F. H. Sawyer
County Treasurer...	John S. Van Doren	Lizzie McDonald	Lizzie McDonald	John T. Scott
Sheriff.....	Frank K. Webb	J. A. Sheffner	J. A. Sheffner	J. A. Sheffner
Clerk of Court.....	E. B. Shaffner	F. H. Sawyer	F. H. Sawyer	Fred. E. Place
Commissioner.....	T. S. Steed	L. L. Gantz	David Kidd	James B. Grieve
Commissioner.....	W. D. Blattenberg	C. A. Hall	C. C. P. Webel	S. W. Conwell
Commissioner.....	L. L. Gantz	C. C. P. Webel	James B. Grieve	A. G. Cheney
County Supt.....	Effie M. Cummings	Effie M. Cummings	Kate C. Stannard	May Hamilton
County Assessor....	L. W. Bailey	F. S. Price	Frank J. Sturgeon	E. L. McGraugh
Constable.....	.....	Truman C. Butler	Wm. Jones	.....
Prosecuting Att'y....	Alex. T. Butler	E. Richard Shipp	John B. Barnes	Wm. O. Wilson
Coroner.....	Dr. A. F. Hoff	Henry A. Lilly	Dr. A. F. Hoff	Wilbur Foshay
County Surveyor....	J. B. Bradley	A. Hemingway	.....	M. N. Wheeler
Justice of Peace....	Frank H. Sawyer	G. R. Hagens	W. E. Tubbs	W. E. Tubbs
1913-1914		1915-1916	1917-1918	1919-1920
County Clerk.....	F. H. Sawyer	F. H. Sawyer	F. H. Sawyer <sup>3</sup>	E. M. Ogburn <sup>4</sup>
County Treasurer...	John T. Scott	Fred W. Aishton	M. C. Price	E. McDonald
Sheriff.....	J. A. Sheffner	H. L. Patton	H. L. Patton	Pat Royce
Clerk of Court.....	Fred E. Place	Fred E. Place	Fred E. Place <sup>5</sup>	Hazel Conwell
Commissioner.....	S. W. Conwell	John T. Scott	T. A. Hall	T. A. Hall
Commissioner.....	R. D. Campbell	R. D. Campbell	A. G. Cheney	Robt. J. Veitch
Commissioner.....	A. G. Cheney	Chas. Anda	Chas. Anda	J. B. Griffith
County Supt.....	May Hamilton	May Hamilton	May Hamilton	May Hamilton
County Assessor....	E. L. McGraugh	Chas. M. Hawks	W. S. Kimball, Jr.	E. L. McGraugh
Prosecuting Att'y....	Wm. O. Wilson	R. H. Nichols	R. H. Nichols	W. H. Patten <sup>7</sup>
Coroner.....	Wilbur Foshay	W. J. Chamberlin	Lew M. Gay	Lew M. Gay
County Surveyor....	M. N. Wheeler	M. N. Wheeler	M. N. Wheeler	M. N. Wheeler
Justice of Peace....	W. E. Tubbs	W. E. Tubbs	W. E. Tubbs	W. E. Tubbs
1921-1922		1923-1924		
County Clerk.....	Helen Carlson <sup>6</sup>	Alma F. Hawley		
County Treasurer...	E. McDonald	Agnes M. Clare		
Sheriff.....	Lee Martin <sup>6</sup>	Perry A. Morris		
Clerk of Court.....	Hazel Conwell	Hazel Conwell		
Commissioner.....	T. A. Hall	T. A. Hall		
Commissioner.....	Robt. J. Veitch	G. T. Morgan		
Commissioner.....	Chas. Anda	J. E. Scott		
County Supt.....	May Hamilton	May Hamilton		
County Assessor....	Lyle E. Jay	Lyle E. Jay		
Prosecuting Att'y....	A. R. Lowey <sup>8</sup>	E. H. Foster		
Coroner.....	Lew M. Gay	Lew M. Gay		
County Surveyor....	Albert Park	Albert Park		
Justice of Peace....	W. E. Tubbs	Henry F. Brennan		

<sup>1</sup> Declared vacant; O. M. Rice appointed. <sup>2</sup> Resigned; O. M. Rice appointed. <sup>3</sup> Died; E. M. Ogburn appointed. <sup>4</sup> Resigned; Helen Carlson appointed. <sup>5</sup> Resigned; Catherine Dunn appointed. <sup>6</sup> Resigned; J. L. Marquis appointed. <sup>7</sup> Resigned; A. R. Lowey appointed. <sup>8</sup> Resigned; M. W. Purcell appointed. <sup>9</sup> Resigned, November 1917; Warren L. Bailey appointed.

*Natrona County's Senators and Representatives in the Legislature*

Year Elected	Representative State Legislature	State Senator
1890.....	William F. Dunn.....	Joel J. Hurt
1892.....	Bryant B. Brooks.....	Joel J. Hurt
1894.....	Patrick Sullivan.....	Robert Taylor
1896.....	John S. Warner.....	Robert Taylor
1898.....	Patrick Sullivan.....	Patrick Sullivan
1900.....	Edward S. White <sup>1</sup> .....	Patrick Sullivan
1902.....	Donald A. Robertson.....	Patrick Sullivan
1904.....	Charles K. Bucknum.....	Patrick Sullivan
1906.....	Charles K. Bucknum.....	Patrick Sullivan
1908.....	Hugh L. Patton.....	Patrick Sullivan
1910.....	Patrick O'Connor.....	Patrick Sullivan
1912.....	Robert Grieve.....	Patrick Sullivan
	Stephen Tobin	
1914.....	Robert Grieve.....	Patrick Sullivan
	Stephen Tobin	
1916.....	W. W. Sproul.....	Patrick O'Connor
	L. C. Mills	
1918.....	J. William Johnson.....	Patrick O'Connor
	Leslie L. Gantz	
1920.....	Harry N. Free.....	J. William Johnson
	J. E. Frisby	
1922.....	M. L. Bishop, Jr.....	J. William Johnson
	E. A. Froyd	Harry N. Free
	C. W. Mapes	
	M. C. Price	
	J. H. Jeffrey	

The representatives and senators were elected in November and took the oath of office the following January.

Bryant B. Brooks of Casper was elected governor of the state of Wyoming in 1904 and again in 1906, serving as chief executive six successive years.

Charles E. Winter of Casper was elected congressman from the state of Wyoming for the 1923-4 term.

## NATRONA COUNTY'S JUDGES OF THE DISTRICT COURT

If the regularly elected and appointed judges of the district court who have presided at the sessions of court held in Natrona county could and would tell some of their experiences what interest-

<sup>1</sup> Edward S. White, Natrona county's representative in the lower house of the sixth session of the Wyoming state legislature, died in Cheyenne on January 14, 1901. Mr. White occupied his seat only three days when he was stricken with pneumonia, and his death resulted after being confined to his hotel but a few days. At the time of his death the members of the house and senate were on a special train going to Rawlins, Laramie, Rock Springs and Evanston, to make a personal inspection of the state penitentiary, the university, the state hospital, and the hospital for the insane. Senator Patrick Sullivan, and Chief Clerk Alfred J. Mokler, both of Casper, were on the special train and the news of Representative White's death cast a gloom over all those on board the train, for it had been announced that the patient's condition was greatly improved when the special train left Cheyenne that morning. The members returned to Cheyenne the second day following the death of their colleague and funeral services were conducted in the capitol building by the members of Wyoming Consistory of Masons. The body was brought to Casper and very impressive funeral services were held here by the Masonic bodies, of which the deceased was a member. Four deaths occurred among the members of the legislature during the sixth session and the flag on the capitol building floated at half-mast during most of the session. After Mr. White's death, Natrona county had no representative in the lower house during the remainder of the session.



ing tales they could unfold. There have been many criminal cases tried in Natrona county. A record of about all of them may be found elsewhere in this volume, but the story told by a layman does not give the inside history that could be related by the presiding judge. In addition to the criminal cases there have been hundreds and hundreds of civil cases heard by these judges. Some of these cases provoked amusement for the spectators as well as the court, and many, many of them carried sadness, disappointment and sometimes financial ruin to the losing side, and few, indeed, were those who gained a great deal, either in wealth or reputation, even though the case was decided in their favor.

From 1890, when Natrona county was organized, until 1913, Albany, Natrona and Fremont counties comprised the Second judicial district. All the judges during that time came from Albany county, not because Albany had any better material than Natrona or Fremont county for a presiding judge, but because there were more voters in Albany county than the combined votes of Natrona and Fremont counties. J. W. Kingman of Laramie City was the first man to preside over the court in the Second district, and his successors on the bench were the following-named gentlemen, all from Laramie City: Judge E. A. Thomas, Judge J. B. Blair, Judge N. C. Sauffly, Judge J. W. Blake, Judge J. H. Hayford, Judge Charles W. Bramel, Judge Charles E. Carpenter and Judge V. J. Tidball. In February, 1913, our state legislature created the new Sixth judicial district, comprising the counties of Natrona, Fremont and Converse. Judge Charles E. Winter, who had located in Casper on the 6th day of January, 1913, was appointed during the first part of March, 1913, by Governor Joseph M. Carey, the first judge of the district, and later resigned from the bench to enter private practice. Judge Winter was very popular while on the bench and was elected in 1922 to represent the state of Wyoming in the lower house of congress. Governor Robert D. Carey appointed Ralph Kimball of Fremont county as Judge Winter's successor, and Judge Kimball resigned to be elevated to the supreme bench of Wyoming, and Judge C. O. Brown of Converse county was appointed to succeed Judge Kimball. At the general election in the fall of 1922 Judge Brown was elected to succeed himself. In the thirty-two years of Natrona county's organization she has furnished but one resident judge, Hon. Charles E. Winter.

#### NATRONA COUNTY'S ASSESSED VALUATION

Most important for the maintenance of a county government is the taxation levied upon the property of the citizens of a county,

and, probably, among the most interesting documents stored away in the "dead" vault in the Natrona county court house are the tax schedules for the year 1890, being the first year that our county was segregated from Carbon. A great many people who have taken up their residence here in recent years are of the opinion that this part of the state was then an exclusive cattle country, but, according to the assessor's figures, there were then 28,901 sheep in the county, valued at \$44,184, against 28,029 cattle, valued at \$295,660. The valuation of the cattle per head, as placed by the state board of equalization, ranged from \$10 to \$25. There were ninety people in the county that year who owned cattle, the largest number owned by one person being 4,000 head; another person owned 3,500 head; another 3,000 head, a number of others were assessed for 2,500 head. There were but ten people in the county who claimed that they were the owners of sheep. George Ferris had 6,000 head, and they were assessed at \$9,000, or \$1.50 per head; Tom Hood had 2,040 head; C. P. Dasch, 4,598; Wm. Madden, 1,500; John Morton, 5,250; Woodruff Bros., 9,500, and then there were thirteen more sheep in the county divided among four people as owners. There were 2,432 head of horses in the county, valued at \$52,762, and 110 mules and asses, valued at \$5,625. There was not a dog or a hog in the county, according to the records of the assessor. There were 158 carriages, valued at \$6,690, and the farming utensils and mechanics' tools were valued at \$8,305. There were but forty-seven people in the whole county who owned clocks, watches and jewelry that seemed to be worth assessing, and the valuation placed upon all of them was \$1,817.15. Fifteen people owned musical instruments, the most valuable one being assessed at \$150, and the one of the lowest value being placed at \$10, the whole being valued at \$935. There were two law libraries in the county, one owned by Alex T. Butler, valued at \$100, and C. C. Wright was the owner of the other, valued at \$50. Fourteen people in the county owned household furniture valued at more than \$100, the whole being assessed at \$980. The capital employed in manufacture was assessed at \$21,755. But one merchant in the county had store fixtures that were worth assessing, and that went in at a valuation of \$200. Three people owned stocks and shares in corporations, the valuation of the whole going in at \$180. There was \$3,377.13 in moneys and credits put in to be assessed, divided among eight people. One merchant had \$1,200 in moneys and credits; another had \$1,000, another \$500, another \$230, another \$200, two men had \$100 each, and the lowest amount turned in was \$47.13. The total valuation of all the personal property in the county turned in to be assessed was \$6,731, divided among ninety-six people, the

highest amount being \$1,000 and the lowest five dollars, there being four people coming in at the five-dollar assessment, one at six dollars; more than a dozen at ten dollars and a great many at twenty-five dollars and up to one hundred dollars. The total assessed valuation for the whole county was \$449,151.28. To compare the above with the assessment made in 1921, which is published at the conclusion of this chapter, will show to some extent how the county has grown in valuation and the wonderful change that has taken place in the short space of thirty-one years.

With each succeeding year the county enjoyed an increase in its assessed valuation, but even with the increase year after year the county in 1895 showed less than a million dollar valuation. To be exact it was \$958,724.92. The town lots and improvements thereon within the county in 1895 showed an assessed valuation of \$11,231.75. There were 11,527 head of cattle in the county at that time; 257,273 head of sheep; 2,460 horses; twenty swine, and three dogs. In five years, or in 1900, the total assessed valuation of the county had increased to \$1,359,313.76. The town lots and improvements were assessed at \$191,992.50, showing an increase of \$180,760.75. There were 8,917 cattle, 3,207 horses, 297,717 sheep and thirty-three swine. In 1901 the total valuation for the county was \$1,794,514.48; and in 1902 the total was \$1,766,973.63, with 364,037 sheep, and 11,968 cattle. In 1903 town lots and improvements were assessed at \$216,532, and there were 499,557 sheep listed for assessment, 16,103 cattle and 5,000 horses. In 1907 the total assessment had increased to \$2,998,371, with town lots and improvements assessed at \$361,750. There were 24,274 cattle, 4,636 horses, 538,876 sheep and 153 swine. In seven years, or in 1914, the total assessed valuation was increased to \$12,373,273, divided as follows: Acres of land, 177,629, \$1,223,322; town lots and improvement, \$3,531,557; cattle, 12,685 head, \$372,550; sheep, 352,567 head, \$1,181,080; horses, 5,601 head, \$249,540; mules 113, \$10,325; swine, 544 head, \$2,978; personal property \$2,281,078; dogs, 810; oil output, 2,284,843 barrels, \$1,142,421; railroads, telegraph and telephone, \$2,292,316; private car lines, \$5,996. In 1918 the total was \$27,286,676, and in 1919 an increase was made to \$33,600,178; 1920 showed an increase to \$47,723,518, and in 1921 the total was \$61,070,426, an increase over 1920 of \$13,346,908, divided into the following classes of property: Number acres patented land, 243,918, \$1,536,920; improvements on land, \$1,261,939; improvements on land, not taxable, \$331,974; value town lots, \$6,332,339; value improvements on town lots, \$9,794,477; equities in state land, \$15,309. Total real property in Natrona county, \$19,272,958. Cattle, 22,096 head, valued at \$819,-



500; sheep, 270,093, \$1,176,671; horses, 6,340, \$202,125; mules, 40, \$3,765; swine, 234, \$1,785; goats, 7, \$35; dogs, 23, \$1,130; carriages, wagons and vehicles, \$54,999; automobiles, \$1,132,258; motor cycles, \$1,425; farming utensils and mechanical tools, \$355,313; clocks and watches, jewelry, \$47,775; musical instruments, \$158,775; private libraries, \$4,500; law libraries, \$19,395; household furniture, \$572,026; average capital in merchandise, \$2,621,527; average value employed in manufacture, \$151,966; office and store fixtures, \$409,171; stock and shares in corporations, \$610,400; money and credits, \$72,372; other property not herein enumerated, \$7,773,265; private car companies, \$157,670; railroad companies, \$5,155,673; telegraph and telephone companies, \$232,148; pipe line companies, \$1,042,120; mining companies, \$7,467; oil companies, \$19,304,391; gas companies, \$123,741; public utility, \$839,131.

Natrona county in 1921 showed the largest assessed valuation of any county in the state and also had the largest number of sheep listed of any of the several counties in Wyoming. It will also be noted that the assessed valuation had increased from less than half a million dollars in 1890 to more than sixty-one million dollars in 1921. This phenomenal increase was due mostly to the development of the oil fields and construction of the oil refineries, which, in addition to the money invested in the development of the oil fields and the building of refineries, was the incentive for bringing many other industries, with additional mercantile houses and professional men to the county, but considerable credit is also due to the stock raising industry which is yet responsible, and always has been, for no small amount of the county's taxes.

## EARNINGS IN THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

The earnings in the office of the county clerk during the year 1917 reached its highest peak, and was more than the earnings in any other county clerk's office in the state for any year, the amount being \$23,679.90, as against \$5,500.05 for 1916. A total of 16,390 instruments were filed for record, as against 3,595 for the previous year. For 1918 the earnings in this office showed a decided falling off with a gradual decline with each year following.

## COUNTY'S BUDGET FOR 1922

In making up the budget for the year 1922 the board of county commissioners estimated that there would be an income of \$252,350, \$10,000 of which would be derived from the earnings in the county

clerk's office, \$2,000 from the office of the clerk of the district court, and \$240,350 from taxation. Of this amount it was estimated that the salaries of officers and deputies would amount to \$68,000, transportation and contingent expense for the various departments, \$8,000; district court expense, \$14,750, justice court expense, \$4,550; coroner's expense, \$3,350; printing and records, \$6,500; court house and jail expense, \$20,000; criminal costs, \$15,000; roads and bridges, \$29,500, and miscellaneous expense \$82,500. The salaries for the officers and deputies were divided as follows: Sheriff, \$9,000; county clerk, \$9,000; county treasurer, \$6,000; county attorney, \$6,500; superintendent of schools, \$1,500; assessor, \$13,000; county commissioners, \$3,000; clerk of the district court, \$4,000; county physician, \$2,500; county agent, \$2,500; health officer, \$4,000; miscellaneous expense to be divided among the several offices, \$7,000. The general miscellaneous expense was estimated as follows: Poor and pauper, \$20,000; county hospital, \$18,000; premium on official bonds, \$1,500; election expense, \$5,000; contagious disease, \$5,000; postage and freight, \$1,000; telegraph and telephone, \$4,000; inspection of horses and cattle, \$1,500; mothers' pensions, \$3,500; county poor farm, \$1,000; clinic, \$4,000, and to cover the 1920 deficit, \$18,000.

### THE COUNTY POOR FARM

The poor and pauper and "widows' expense" of Natrona county is an annual burden to the taxpayers of more than \$25,000, and on account of the liberality of the members of the board of county commissioners the amount is rapidly increasing, and it is truly said that many of the people who are kept by the county eat better food, wear more expensive clothing and live in better houses than many of the laboring class who "earn their bread by the sweat of their brow." At one time the county clerk had published in the official proceedings of the county commissioners the names of those who received alms from the county, and the amount given them, but such a protest was made against the action of the clerk in the publication of the names of those who were classed as "poor and pauper," that the commissioners ordered the clerk in the future to forego the publication of the names, "because of the extra advertising expense."

On April 29, 1919, the board of county commissioners bought from N. S. Wilson 870 acres of land situated four and one-half miles east from the city of Casper. Two hundred acres of this land was under irrigation from water supplied by Elkhorn and Cloud creeks. The improvements on the farm included a six-room house, stables,

garage, electric light and water systems, private telephone connecting with the Casper exchange, and many other conveniences. It was the intention of the commissioners to send the county's indigent to this farm where sustenance would not be so great, but they refused to go to the farm, and for a short time some of them did not apply for aid. In a few months, however, they were on the county pay roll again and some of them have been there ever since, and they continue to live in the city with all the comforts and conveniences that a liberal county administration can provide for them.

### THE BANKS OF NATRONA COUNTY

One of the best indications of a community's growth and prosperity is to be found in its banking institutions, and certainly the growth shown in the banks of Casper since the town was organized has been phenomenal. The steady increase in the volume of business transacted by the banks is but a reflection in the growth of all lines of business in Casper and vicinity, which few cities in the whole of the United States will duplicate.

The Bank of Casper, with George Weber as cashier and proprietor, opened its doors for business in Casper in the fall of 1888. This was the first bank in Casper. January 1, 1889, it carried an advertisement to the effect that its paid-up capital stock was \$5,000, with a surplus of \$114.39. The financial statement published October 11, 1889, showed the resources consisted of loans and discounts, \$3,916.82; overdrafts, \$795.98; due from National banks, \$1,498.25; checks, currency, gold, silver, legal tender, and other cash items, \$2,592.87; real estate, furniture, and fixtures, \$1,800. The liabilities were: Deposits, subject to check, \$3,902.80; demand certificates of deposit, \$600; time certificates, \$4,073.02; capital and surplus, \$4,252.30. In January, 1891, W. A. Denecke became cashier and the name was changed to W. A. Denecke & Company's Bank of Casper. On November 27, 1903, this bank failed. It was said that the cause of the failure was that the heaviest depositors drew out large amounts of money and the heaviest borrowers were unable to meet their notes which were due and owing the bank. S. W. Conwell was appointed receiver and it was announced that about \$51,000 was on deposit and there was \$4,000 cash on hand when the bank closed. Notes and securities outstanding were ample to pay the depositors in full as soon as the money depression was relieved and the outstanding indebtedness to the bank could be collected. In due time the depositors were paid in full. This was the first and only bank failure in Casper.

The banking house of C. H. King & Company of Casper commenced business in the early summer of 1889, with Alex. J. Cunningham as cashier and C. H. King, president. This was the second bank for Casper. At the close of business on October 29, 1889, this bank in its financial statement showed it had resources at its command as follows: Loans and discounts, \$861.24; overdrafts, \$355.83; due from National banks, \$3,966.93; furniture and fixtures, \$545.79; expenses, \$28.30; checks and other cash items, \$151.75; legal tender, \$1,450; nickels and cents, \$631; specie, \$25; total, \$7,391.15. The liabilities were: Capital stock, \$1,250, and undivided profits, \$26.36; individual deposits, subject to check, \$6,114.79. In 1894 the C. H. King & Company bank was merged into the Richards, Cunningham & Company bank. The Richards, Cunningham & Company bank was merged into the Casper National bank on July 1, 1903, with a capital stock of \$50,000. The officers were: A. J. Cunningham, president; J. DeForest Richards, vice president; E. P. Palmer, cashier; Maud Bohner, assistant cashier; and E. C. Harris, B. B. Brooks, Patrick Sullivan, P. C. Nicolaysen, A. J. Cunningham and J. DeForest Richards, directors. The statement to the comptroller of currency on September 9, 1903, showed: Loans and discounts, \$249,205.27; National bank notes outstanding, \$13,500; undivided deposits subject to check, \$229,788.39; demand certificates of deposit, \$1,140; time certificates of deposit, \$60,141.82. The capital stock paid in was \$50,000. There was no surplus but the undivided profits were \$18.46. This was the only bank doing business in Casper at that time. On December 29, 1922, there were: Loans and discounts, \$1,753,561.08; overdrafts, \$989.28; U. S. bonds and government securities, \$61,543.46; other bonds and stocks, \$74,327.24; banking house, furniture and fixtures, \$141,355.89; cash due from other banks and bankers and U. S. treasurer, \$819,353.58. Capital stock, \$100,000; surplus, \$100,000; undivided profits, \$26,851.64; circulating notes outstanding, \$50,000; demand deposits, time deposits, cashier's checks, certified checks and all other deposits and those due state and National banks, \$2,574,278.89. Total, \$2,851,130.53.

The American Exchange bank was opened for business in Casper on March 2, 1891. This was Casper's third bank. The financial statement showed that the institution had real estate worth \$1,500; furniture and fixtures, \$1,000; cash on hand, \$3,500; and other property owned by the firm, \$15,000; making a total of \$21,000. The liabilities were listed as naught. Alexander McKinney was president, Peter O'Malley, vice president, and J. E. Plummer, cashier. The American Exchange was very short lived, having been in existence just a year and a day, but its affairs were closed up in a business-like

manner. On March 2, 1892, a notice was published in the local newspaper to the effect that the co-partnership between A. McKinney, Peter O'Malley, and J. E. Plummer, under the name of the American Exchange bank, was dissolved, and that all notes and bills of the co-partnership were payable to A. McKinney. There was then not enough business in the town for three banks and the law of the "survival of the fittest" prevailed.

The Stockmen's National Bank of Casper was granted a charter in October, 1903, with C. H. Townsend, P. H. Shallenberger, Fred A. Gooding, Frank Wood, L. L. Gantz, C. K. Bucknum, and S. T. Mosser as stockholders. The capital stock was \$50,000. The institution was opened for business in the Townsend building on the northwest corner of Center and Second streets on Monday, December 28, 1903, with C. H. Townsend, president; Percy H. Shallenberger, cashier; and Miss Lizzie McDonald, assistant cashier. This was the second bank in Casper at that time. The directors and officers on December 31, 1922, were: C. H. Townsend, president; Frank Wood, vice president; L. B. Townsend, cashier; V. W. Mokler, assistant cashier; L. L. Gantz, L. E. Townsend, C. L. Rhinemuth, directors. On December 29, 1922, the statement showed: Loans and discounts, \$951,992.50; U. S. bonds, \$146,000; overdrafts, \$1,405.17; other bonds and securities, \$155,911.50; furniture and fixtures, \$2,500; cash on hand, due from banks and the U. S. treasurer, \$275,568.83. Capital stock, \$50,000; surplus, \$125,000; undivided profits, \$28,298.66; bills payable, \$75,000; circulation, \$48,500; deposits, \$1,206,579.34. Total, \$1,533,378.

The First Trust and Savings Bank of Casper was organized January 19, 1915, and opened for business January 25, 1915. The following associates were elected to the first board of directors: Harold Banner, C. H. Townsend, Henry Bayer, John Daly, F. H. Sawyer, John T. Scott, William O. Wilson. The bank opened with a capital of \$25,000. The first statement was made December 31, 1915, with figures as follows: Capital, \$25,000; loans, \$55,115; deposits, \$40,972. The following associates were on January 1, 1923, serving as board of directors: C. H. Townsend, W. O. Wilson, W. O. Ratcliff, L. B. Townsend, C. L. Rhinemuth, A. J. Mokler, Sam Switzer. The financial condition on December 29, 1922, was: Real estate loans, \$441,865.55; bonds, securities, etc., \$1,086; cash and sight exchange, \$72,795.48. The resources were: Capital stock, \$25,000; surplus, \$25,000; undivided profits, \$17,869.71; savings accounts, \$393,308.66; time certificates, \$54,568.66. Total, \$515,747.03.

On January 11, 1913, Messrs. Thomas A. Cosgriff and George E. Abbott, together with Roy C. Wyland, organized a bank in Casper



under the state banking laws, with the name of Cosgriff & Abbott, Bankers. The capital stock was \$10,000. The bank was opened in a small room in the Iris theatre building. A later change of location placed them in the corner room known as the Grand Central hotel lobby, on the southwest corner of Center and Second streets. On May 2, 1914, the bank received its charter as The Wyoming National Bank of Casper. B. B. Brooks was then chosen as president, Thomas A. Cosgriff and G. E. Abbott as vice presidents, and Roy C. Wyland as cashier. Under the National laws the bank was organized on a basis of \$50,000 as capital and \$5,000 as surplus. Since that time the capital of the bank increased to \$100,000 and \$100,000 as earned placed to the surplus account of the bank. From a small capitalization and initial deposits on the first day of \$4,000 the bank, on January 1, 1922, had increased to a capital of \$100,000, a surplus of \$100,000 with resources of \$4,000,000. The bank is now located in the Midwest Refining company's building on the corner of Second and Wolcott streets. The officers and directorate of the bank have remained practically unchanged since its organization, Carl F. Shumaker, the present cashier, having succeeded Thomas A. Cosgriff, deceased, as a director, Mr. Wyland being made vice president. The officers and directors at present are: B. B. Brooks, president; G. E. Abbott, vice president; Roy C. Wyland, vice president; Carl F. Shumaker, cashier; P. J. O'Connor, director. At the close of business December 29, 1922, this bank had loans and discounts amounting to \$3,002,439.53; overdrafts, \$1,729.19; U. S. bonds and revenue stamps, \$119,122.69; other bonds and warrants, \$2,456.30; stock in federal reserve bank, \$7,500; furniture and fixtures, \$85,697.90; real estate, \$9,813.50; cash on hand, due from banks and U. S. treasurer, \$843,578.29. Capital stock, \$100,000; surplus, \$150,000; undivided profits, \$61,264.10; circulation, \$100,000; deposits, \$3,661,073.20. Total \$4,072,337.40.

The National Bank of Commerce was organized October 10, 1919, and opened for business November 24, 1919. The bank was organized by Arthur K. Lee, with the following associates, who were elected the first board of directors: John McFayden, Ira G. Wetherill, Joe E. Denham, H. L. Patton, Arthur K. Lee, L. A. Reed, Earl C. Boyle, Thomas Kenney, T. F. Algeo, George B. Nelson, L. G. Murphy. The bank opened with a capital of \$125,000 and with \$12,500 paid up surplus. The first statement to the comptroller of currency was made December 31, 1921, with figures as follows: Capital, \$125,000; surplus, \$12,500; loans, \$280,000; deposits, \$455,000. At the close of business December 29, 1922, this bank had loans and discounts amounting to \$1,151,327.82; overdrafts, \$705.11; U. S. bonds to

secure circulation, \$125,000; stock in federal reserve bank and other securities, \$6,650; furniture and fixtures, \$17,500; five per cent redemption fund with the U. S. treasury, \$6,250; cash in vault and due from banks, \$457,449.35. The capital stock was \$125,000; surplus and undivided profits, \$30,950.30; circulation, \$125,000; deposits, \$1,483,930.98, with a total of \$1,764,880.28.

The Citizens National bank of Casper was chartered as a state bank and opened for business May 1, 1917, with a capitalization of \$50,000. Dr. John F. Leeper was elected president and had associated with him as directors John Beaton, M. J. Burke, C. M. Elgin, T. A. Dean, C. H. Horstman, and T. A. Hall. W. J. Bailey was elected as cashier. This bank was first located in one corner of the Chamberlin Furniture company's store room which was then doing business in what is now the Golden Rule store building, on the south side of Second street, between Center and Wolcott, but when the Oil Exchange building, now known as the Consolidated Royalty building, was erected a modern banking room was fitted up for this bank where it has since been located. The vacancy caused by the death of Dr. Leeper in December, 1920, was filled by the election of M. J. Burke to the presidency. The capital stock was increased to \$100,000 with a surplus of \$25,000 at the time of the conversion from a state to a National bank. On December 29, 1922: Loans and discounts, \$619,169.92; overdrafts, \$2,993.72; U. S. bonds and other stocks and bonds, \$229,427.37; furniture and fixtures and real estate owned, \$21,724.02; cash on hand, due from U. S. treasury, and from other banks and bankers, \$332,130.04. Capital stock, \$100,000; surplus, \$25,000; undivided profits, \$17,501.06; circulating notes outstanding, \$100,000; demand and time deposits, cashier's checks, certified checks and all other deposits and those due state and National banks, \$962,944.01; with a total of \$1,205,445.07.

The Wyoming Trust Company bank was organized and opened for business July 1, 1921. The board of directors at the time of the bank's organization were: P. J. O'Connor, president; R. C. Cather, vice president, N. S. Wilson, vice president; Leo A. Dunn, cashier; B. B. Brooks, Roy C. Wyland, Carl F. Shumaker and R. H. Nichols, directors. The bank opened with a capital of \$100,000 and \$10,000 paid up surplus. The first statement to the comptroller of currency was made on September 6, 1921, with figures as follows: Capital, \$100,000; surplus, \$10,000; loans, \$204,000; deposits, \$176,000. December 29, 1922, there were loans and discounts, \$347,831.45; overdrafts, \$208.38; stocks and bonds, \$16,037.50; banking house and fixtures, \$14,597.30; cash on hand and due from other banks \$121,801.36. Capital stock, \$100,000; surplus, \$10,000; undivided

profits, \$1,132.28; demand deposits, time deposits, cashier's checks, certified checks and all other deposits and those due state and National banks, \$389,343.71; with a total of \$500,475.99.

The Casper Clearing House association, whose membership consists of all the banks of Casper, was organized February 7, 1921, with A. J. Cunningham, president; Roy C. Wyland, vice president; J. R. Schlueter, secretary, and W. J. Bailey, treasurer. The association clears all bank debits of the town each day, and all the banks of the city work in harmony. Since its existence the Clearing House association has solved many perplexing problems which has resulted beneficially to all concerned. The clearings of the banks by the month since the association was organized up to the first of January, 1922, was as follows:

February.....	\$ 2,917,506.18
March.....	4,209,967.47
April.....	4,646,571.60
May.....	4,924,915.52
June.....	5,434,846.09
July.....	5,030,959.69
August.....	4,034,593.70
September.....	4,114,817.47
October.....	4,714,725.10
November.....	4,469,457.00
December.....	4,885,696.47
Total.....	\$49,384,056.31

The Bank of Salt Creek, with a capital of \$25,000, was opened at Lavoye, or the Mosher camp, in the Salt Creek oil field, October 21, 1922. The stockholders and directors were J. H. Montgomery, president; A. C. Andrews, vice president; E. W. Downing, cashier; H. S. Durrie, assistant cashier; Barton A. Myers and George A. Gatewood, directors.

The Salt Creek State bank was established and opened for business on October 21, 1922, located at Lavoye, which is commonly known as the Mosher camp, in the Salt Creek oil field. Its capital stock was \$25,000 and the incorporators and directors of the institution were: Roy C. Wyland, president; B. B. Brooks, vice president; Carl F. Shumaker, P. J. O'Connor and G. E. Abbott, directors, and Thomas Keith, cashier.

#### NEWSPAPERS OF NATRONA COUNTY

The *Casper Weekly Mail* was established November 23, 1888, by Lombard and Casebeer and was the first newspaper published in Natrona county. Mr. Lombard retired on April 1, 1889, and James



A. Casebeer, who was Casper's third postmaster, became sole owner of the newspaper. Mr. Casebeer was also the only delegate from Casper to the Constitutional Convention which was held in Cheyenne in September, 1889. Alex T. Butler bought the *Mail* from Mr. Casebeer and assumed the editorial and business management on May 16, 1890. Mr. Casebeer left at once for the Yellowstone National park and never returned to Casper. An effort was made to find him and have him attend the reunion of the delegates of the Constitutional Convention, held in Cheyenne in 1920, but he could not be located. The *Mail* suspended publication after its issue of January 16, 1891, after having been published a little more than two years. It was under Mr. Butler's ownership when it suspended. This was the third Natrona county publication to go to the newspaper graveyard, the *Mail* having been preceded by the *Sweetwater* (Bothwell) *Chief* and the *Bessemer Journal*.

The *Bessemer Journal* was the second newspaper to be established in Natrona county and the second to suspend publication. It was first published late in the year of 1888. J. Enos Waite was editor and business manager from its beginning to the end. After struggling until the latter part of December, 1890, the publication was suspended and the plant was seized by its creditors.

The *Sweetwater Chief*, published at the town of Bothwell by H. B. Fetz, was the third publication to make its appearance in Natrona county and the first to start the newspaper graveyard. It was established in the spring of 1890, blooming forth with the flowers in the Sweetwater valley and it also withered and died with those same flowers in the fall of the year. During its existence it advocated the building of a railroad through the Sweetwater country, the removal of the state capital to Bothwell, the development of the gold, silver, and copper mines in that vicinity, the drilling of oil wells in the basin and the development of the soda lakes close at hand. Instead of the town's increasing in population, two of its citizens, who were considered a menace to the community but nevertheless were responsible for a great number of visitors making frequent pilgrimages to the place, were hanged to a tree on a summer's day, and as no one seemed to care to come there to continue the business they had started, but had so suddenly left, and many visitors ceased their coming, on account of the lack of some of the things they considered necessary for their entertainment, the *Chief* lacked the financial support necessary in all well regulated printing offices, and it was not long until that disseminator of news and advocator of all that was good ceased publication, and the plant was packed up and taken to Rawlins.

Volume 1, number 1, of the *Wyoming Derrick*, published in Casper, was issued May 21, 1890, by the Natrona County Publishing company, with W. S. Kimball as editor and business manager. The stockholders were Joel J. Hurt, C. C. Wright, P. C. Nicolaysen, George Mitchell and A. J. Cunningham. The *Derrick* was a typographical gem and one of the best edited newspapers in the then Territory of Wyoming. On June 25, 1891, Mr. Kimball retired as editor and bought a half interest in the Pioneer drug store with C. F. G. Bostleman. Joel J. Hurt at this time bought up all the stock and became the sole owner of the plant, and he leased it to P. T. McNamara and C. W. Wixcey. Wixcey retired in two months and Mr. McNamara continued as editor until March 3, 1892, when Major E. H. French took charge temporarily. Alex T. Butler bought the plant from Mr. Hurt and was editor for nearly four months, when he sold it in July to J. K. Calkins, who was editor and publisher until April 15, 1895, when he sold it to W. H. Korn. P. C. Hays bought an interest in the plant with Mr. Korn in the fall of 1896, and on April 7, 1898, Mr. Korn sold his interest to Colonel Emerson H. Kimball. Mr. Hays bought Mr. Kimball's interest on July 1, 1898, and published the paper until August 10, 1905, when he leased the plant to M. A. Cameron. Mr. Cameron continued the publication until March 2, 1906. The leading editorial in that issue was: "This space is reserved. Watch it next week." Next week never came for the *Derrick*. It went the way of its three predecessors. The *Tribune* was then the only newspaper published in Natrona county.

The *Natrona Tribune* was first published on June 1, 1891. J. Enos Waite was the publisher. The plant was owned by about twenty men, organized under the name of the Republican Publishing company. Waite retired on February 10, 1892, and was succeeded by M. P. Wheeler. Mr. Wheeler published the paper until June 24, 1893, when Alex T. Butler leased the plant and remained until August 7, 1893. W. E. Ellsworth was then hired to conduct the business and wrote the local news and editorials. He was in charge until July 1, 1894. Ben L. Green followed Mr. Ellsworth, and on November 22, 1894, O. A. Hamilton succeeded Green. April 11, 1895, Hamilton relinquished to Fred E. Seeley. Seeley published the paper three weeks and on May 2, 1895, F. H. Barrow became editor and publisher. George P. Devenport leased the plant on December 31, 1896, and was publisher until June 1, 1897, when A. J. Mokler bought the plant from the Republican Publishing company and changed the name to the *Natrona County Tribune*. Mr. Mokler published the *Tribune* for seventeen years and four and a half months, and on





October 15, 1914, sold the plant to J. E. Hanway and a number of associates. A stock company was organized, with Mr. Hanway as president. The development of the Salt Creek oil fields had commenced at this time and Casper showed encouraging signs of developing into a city, and the *Tribune* keeping pace with the conditions, made improvements as its patronage justified. On February 9, 1916, the *Casper Daily Tribune* was established and has grown to be the leading newspaper, with the best equipped plant, in the state. The weekly *Natrona County Tribune* was absorbed by the *Wyoming Weekly Review* on February 19, 1921. The *Review* was a state newspaper, and its mission was to present a review of the week's happenings not only of Wyoming, but of the nation. The Tribune Publishing company was the owner of the *Review*. On August 25, 1922, J. E. and E. E. Hanway sold the *Tribune* and *Weekly Review* to Charles W. Barton of New York City, and on September 20, 1922, the publication of the *Review* was discontinued and merged with the *Sunday Morning Tribune*.

The *Casper Press* was established in August, 1908, by a man named Merrill of Wheatland, with Alex T. Butler as owner. Merrill retired in about ten months and Mr. Butler edited the paper until January, 1909, when H. J. Peterson took charge and conducted the business until August 11, 1911. Mr. Peterson then bought a new plant and established the *Casper Record*, and C. Littlefield bought the *Press* plant from Mr. Butler, who conducted the paper as a weekly until June 19, 1914, when a small daily paper was issued. Neither the weekly nor the daily was a paying proposition; the town was small and the newspaper field was limited; instead of three weekly papers and one daily to cover the field and reap the harvest one weekly was sufficient, and the survival of the strongest was the only road to supremacy. In about a year the *Press* became so heavily involved in financial difficulties that Robert D. Carey, the heaviest stockholder, took over the plant and leased it to Henry F. Brennan. This was Mr. Brennan's first venture in the newspaper business, and he was making no better success than his predecessor, and on March 1, 1916, W. W. Slack, an experienced printer, became editor-manager, in partnership with Mr. Brennan, on a lease agreement with Mr. Carey. Mr. Brennan retired September 30, 1916, and Wm. Jardine formed a partnership with Mr. Slack. On December 23, 1916, the *Press* and *Record* were consolidated and H. J. Peterson became sole proprietor. The oil business at that time brought great prosperity to Casper, and the *Press-Record* prospered with all other lines of business here. On November 1, 1917, Percy E. Cropper and associates of Salt Lake bought the *Press-Record* from Mr. Peterson but

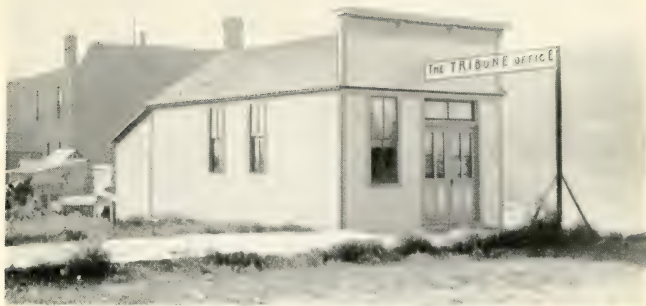
in about six months it became involved in financial difficulties and the creditors relieved Mr. Cropper. A. J. Mokler was appointed temporary receiver and remained until the financial difficulties were straightened out. Within ten days the business was put on a paying basis, and on June 15, 1918, W. B. Holliday bought the plant and changed the evening paper to a morning publication. It was not long until failure again showed her face at the door and there were so many men at the helm attempting to keep the publication from sinking that a list is unobtainable, but the creditors in the fall of the year appointed Ira W. Naylor receiver, "on account of the assets of the company being in danger of disruption." The daily publication was suspended October 30, 1918, and the *Weekly Press* was issued on Thursdays and the *Record* on Sundays. New life and new blood was injected into the business, and on November 18th, the *Press* resumed publication as a daily morning paper with W. W. Sproul as editor. It was short-lived, however, for on December 23, 1919, the *Weekly Record* and *Daily Press* suspended "on account of the lack of financial and business support," and the doors of the office were closed by the creditors, and this was the last of the *Press* and *Record*, the fifth and sixth newspapers of the county to give up the ghost.

The *Wyoming Oil World*, published in Casper, was founded June, 1918, by Victor Clark, who conducted the publication for one year, when L. C. Bailey took charge until April, 1921. The *Wyoming Oil World* and the *Wyoming Oil Review* were consolidated in July, 1920, and in February, 1922, the publication absorbed the *Northwest Oil News*. A. J. Hazlett bought the publication in April, 1921, and in January, 1922, changed the name to the *Inland Oil Index*. As its name indicates, its news and business is wholly with the oil interests.

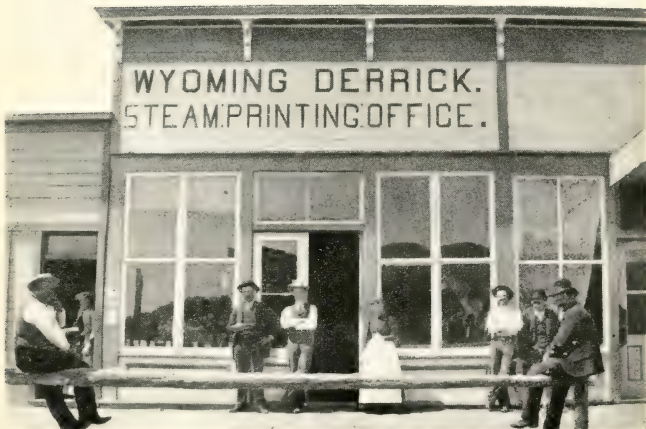
From the remains of the *Casper Press-Record* plant sprung the *Casper Herald*. Frank M. O'Brien, Elizabeth D. O'Brien and P. C. Kelley were the original stockholders of the new enterprise, which made its first appearance as a morning newspaper on July 20, 1919. Much new machinery and equipment was added and the paper became very popular as a morning publication from the beginning. The business was conducted as a partnership until the spring of 1921, when the Casper Herald Publishing company was incorporated with a capital stock of \$100,000, with the three original owners as the principal stockholders. On September 18, 1922, Mr. O'Brien sold the controlling interest in the *Herald* to M. M. Levand, who had been connected with the *Denver Post* and the *Kansas City Post*.

The *Free Press*, published in Casper, for the enlightenment and in the interest of organized labor, was first issued June 18, 1920. Its founder and first editor, John F. Leheney, proudly boasted that the





"TRIBUNE" OFFICE, ON CENTER STREET, 1900



DERRICK OFFICE, 1893





publication was started on a sheet of wrapping paper. Miss Bessie McKinney and John D. Salmond, leaders of organized labor, and Michael J. Quealey, a capitalist, were interested in the *Free Press* with Mr. Leheney in a financial way, and had it not been for their influence and timely financial assistance there would be nothing further to chronicle in this connection, except to announce the date of its suspension, but now, like Tennyson's brook, it hopes to "go on forever." For the first year, and in fact ever since its existence, the *Free Press* has been in a precarious financial state, and while it cannot claim the distinction, like Topsy, in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," of being entirely without parentage, it was a homeless wanderer for more than a year. It was conceived in idealism, born in poverty and nurtured in adversity. It was printed by one of the local printing offices for the first fourteen months, but since August, 1921, it has been issued from its own plant, which was installed at an initial cost of about \$15,000, the greater portion of which is causing the stockholders to loosen their purse strings at regular intervals when the payments become due, and at the same time serves as a reminder that while the editorials in a labor journal generally beam with brilliancy, "all is not gold that glistens." In February, 1921, the Free Press Publishing company was incorporated, with a capitalization of \$50,000. Under a provision of the by-laws then adopted, stock may be sold to organized labor only. The outstanding stock is, therefore, owned by the various labor unions throughout the state of Wyoming and by the members of union labor. In September, 1921, Mr. Leheney resigned as president of the board of directors and as editor, and John A. Barker was elected to the positions, but on February, 1922, E. A. Shields was elected president; Charles L. Howard, secretary-treasurer; Austin Riley, Edna Hoffman, George Vogel, A. E. Gosnell, Wm. Schatzlein and John A. Barker, as the board of directors, with Mr. Barker as editor.

The *Mills Item* had very bright prospects to "fill a long felt want" in the new town of Mills, but it was the shortest lived newspaper ever published in Natrona county. The first, last and only issue was published on Saturday, May 27, 1922. Theo. Flanagan was the editor and publisher. He had no type or machinery but arranged with a Casper printing establishment to furnish these necessary articles. In his salutatory he said he "hoped the people of Mills would form a good impression of both the paper and the editor. The *Item* is for Mills first, last and all the time." Inasmuch as the *Item* as well as Mr. Flanagan did not again make their appearance the people of Mills did not form a good opinion of the paper or the editor as he had hoped they would.

Mr. Flanagan moved from Mills to North Casper, where he established the *North Casper News*, "a community paper, published in the interest of North Casper."

The *Salt Creek Gusher*, with E. A. Gatewood and Gregory Powell as publishers, whose motto, carried at the top of the paper "'Tis a Privilege to Live in Salt Creek," and whose editorial policy was "Our Aim is to Serve Salt Creek," was established April 8, 1922. The first issue was a six-page four-column, home-print sheet, and was a credit to the town it represented, and had bright prospects of surviving the vicissitudes that usually are encountered by a small-town weekly newspaper.

The *Salt Creek Journal*, with Frank O'Brien as publisher, was the second newspaper venture in Salt Creek. This paper was published in the *Casper Herald* office, with Salt Creek news items and the events of the day taken from the *Herald* columns. M. M. Levand became proprietor of this publication on September 18, 1922, when he purchased the *Herald*.

### NATRONA COUNTY'S TWO COURT HOUSES

From the date of Natrona county's organization in April, 1890, until July, 1895, the county officers occupied two rooms on the second floor over Robert White's saloon, on Center street. The terms of the district court were held in the town hall. In the early spring of 1895 the board of county commissioners, with Charles K. Bucknum as chairman, wisely decided that a new court house was needed, and accordingly a contract was let for the construction of a two-story frame building to be covered with seam iron. The dimensions of the building were 24x36 feet and the size of the brick vault was 8x12 feet. The cost of this building, complete, was \$477. There were eight rooms in the building, and the county clerk and clerk of the district court, the board of county commissioners and the brand commissioners occupied the two lower rooms on the south side, the county surveyor and treasurer occupied the two lower rooms on the north side; the county attorney and the sheriff were in the rooms on the south side, upstairs, and the terms of the district court were supposed to be held in the two rooms upstairs on the north side, but as these rooms were too small to accommodate these proceedings, they were generally vacant. The county surveyor occupied any of the rooms that suited him best, and he generally could be found in one of the rooms with the county clerk. From this very convenient and commodious arrangement it can readily be seen that there was plenty of room for all and some to spare. This building was located on the

west side of David street, between Yellowstone Highway and Mid-west avenue.

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In the early days the population of the county was from 500 to 1,000 and the assessed valuation was in the neighborhood of a million dollars. But in 1906 the county had grown in population and wealth, and the people felt that they must have a court house in keeping with their size and money, and on March 1, 1906, at a meeting of the Casper Booster's club a committee consisting of Patrick Sullivan, W. A. Blackmore, C. M. Elgin, Oscar Hiestand and E. F. Seaver, was appointed to meet with the board of county commissioners and request that preliminary arrangements be made for the selection of a site and the erection of a suitable court house for the county. Petitions were circulated requesting the commissioners to submit to the electors of the county, at a special election, the question of whether the board of commissioners should be authorized to issue coupon bonds in the sum of \$40,000 for the purpose of raising funds with which to build a new court house. The election was held in November, 1906, and 676 votes were cast for the bonds, with 139 against.

Everything up until this time, apparently, had been going smoothly, but there were some people in the county then, as there probably are now, who were always and completely out of tune with their environments. Some of these people had lived in the county almost from the beginning of its organization and they had nearly always opposed everything and everybody that looked progressive, and it was surprising that matters had progressed so far without friction. But when the selection for the site of the new building was to be made by the board of county commissioners the war clouds commenced to thicken, and it was soon found that the taxpayers were wallowing in the mire of personalities and the intricacies of the law, from which the majority extricated themselves from the cataclysm with difficulty. No doubt there were a few men on both sides of the question who were self-centered, case-hardened, hide-bound and utterly uncharitable, while there were many others who were unquestionably honest and sincere. It was a bitter contest, and everybody was active; the men on each side "bowed their necks and stiffened their backs," and were determined to make a fight until their last chance to win had gone.

Three sites were favored, one on north Center street, where the building was finally located, one on south Wolcott street, eight blocks south of what was then the center of the town, and the other on David street, where the court house at that time was situated.

On January 1, 1907, the \$40,000 bonds were issued, and the board of county commissioners, consisting of L. L. Gantz, C. C. P. Webel

and C. A. Hall, met in special session for the purpose of deciding upon the location for the new building. A great many people were present at this meeting and some heated argument was indulged in. Petitions were presented favoring the three sites, and after patiently listening to the argument, carefully perusing the petitions and diligently studying the situation from every angle, it was decided the north Center street site was the one favored by the greatest number of taxpayers, and the commissioners unanimously decided that this was where the building should be. But this was far from ending the controversy, as will be seen later.

C. A. Randall, the local architect, was instructed to draw plans and specifications for the building, and by the time they were finished the summer months were far advanced, but the blood of the defeated factions was still boiling. In November, 1907, at a meeting of the board of county commissioners the contract for the construction of the building was awarded to Schmidt & Esmay of Douglas, the price being \$44,274, the building to be completed November 1, 1908.

The contractors commenced at once to excavate for the foundation and carry out their part of the contract, but on December 20, 1907, Silas Adsit, through his attorney, Alex T. Butler, filed a petition with the clerk of the district court asking that an injunction be issued by Judge Carpenter restraining the board of county commissioners of Natrona county and Schmidt & Esmay, the contractors, from constructing the court house at the north end of Center street. The petitioner alleged that when the board of county commissioners claimed that a majority of the taxpayers favored that location, and when they said that it was a suitable and plausible location, they did not tell the truth, and that the commissioners decided upon that location for the purpose of cheating and injuring the petitioner and deteriorating the value of his real estate in the town of Casper, and that the commissioners were in collusion with speculators that owned real estate near the proposed site. He further said that the records of the county would be imperiled by the overflow of the Platte river and the continuous blowing of sand, and that the grounds could not be beautified because of the lack of water and the abundance of sand. After making numerous and divers other charges he concluded his petition by claiming that all the actions of the county commissioners in regard to selecting the site and awarding the contract for the construction of the building was illegal, and for these things he asked the court to issue a perpetual restraining order, enjoining the commissioners from paying out any money for the construction of the court house.



CASPER'S FIRST JAIL BUILDING, 1890  
Dr. Joseph Benson was cremated in this jail



NATRONA COUNTY'S FIRST COURT HOUSE,  
1893, COVERED WITH SEAM IRON



NATRONA COUNTY COURT HOUSE, 1908





For some of the allegations contained in the petition which reflected upon them, the contractors and the architect made arrangements to bring action against Mr. Adsit, charging him with libel, and asking for damages to the amount of \$100,000.

When the matter of granting the temporary restraining order came before Judge Carpenter, he said he would readily grant the order when Mr. Adsit should procure a good and sufficient bond, in the sum of \$18,000, but until the bond was presented the contractors would continue uninterrupted with their work. The matter came up for final hearing the last week in February, and on account of the petitioner being able to secure only one name on the bond, it was declared to be insufficient, and the court refused to grant the injunction, but this did not settle the controversy. The objectors had not yet exhausted all their means to stop the progress of the building, for after the excavation for the basement had been completed, and a great deal of material was on the ground, and when the contractors had hired a large force of men, J. M. Carey refused to deliver to the county a deed for that portion of the ground he owned upon which the court house was to be built, and work on the building was then temporarily suspended.

Shortly after the site for the building had been selected by the board of county commissioners, a contract was made with Mr. Carey, through M. P. Wheeler his Casper agent, for the purchase of the lots, and at the same time a number of other lots which would be used for the court house grounds were purchased from other parties. The contract for the purchase of the lots from the Carey company were drawn up and properly signed by the Carey company agent, and the agent of the individuals who were purchasing the land and were going to present it to the county, free of charge, for court house purposes. And it was agreed that full payment would be made when the deed was delivered. Shortly after this contract was made Mr. Wheeler was compelled to undergo a dangerous operation, and before he could return home from Chicago the time agreed upon for the payment of the lots had expired, and Mr. Carey at once canceled the contract and withdrew the lots from the market, although the money was tendered him for the payment of them according to the contract.

A delegation immediately went to Cheyenne and waited on Mr. Carey, and he agreed to come to Casper the first week in April and make an investigation of conditions, and at a mass meeting held in the town hall on April 3, at which Mr. Carey and a large number of citizens were present, much argument was presented for and against the building of the court house on the proposed site. Mr. Carey did

not at once give his decision in regard to the sale of the lots, but after returning to his home in Cheyenne he wrote to the board of county commissioners, protesting against the court house being built on the north Center street site, "unless the property is first donated by us, purchased of us or procured by condemnation proceedings." A number of citizens and taxpayers put up a bond to the county commissioners guaranteeing title to the north Center street site, regardless of the protest of Mr. Carey, and at a special meeting of the town council an ordinance was adopted which vacated and closed to public use the land provided for a court house building and a court house yard on north Center street. Some of those who were opposed to this site were present at the council meeting and they threatened to throw "the members of the town council in jail, as they had thrown the members of the school board in jail, and if this street was blockaded, they said they would tear up and blockade and fence the alleys and the streets anywhere in town that they chose. The majority of the members of the town council and all the members of the board of county commissioners, together with about fifty substantial taxpayers, were determined that the work on the building should proceed, and they personally guaranteed to the city and county and the contractors the payment of all the expense of court proceedings and any other expense that might arise, and the contractors again commenced work on the building, and continued without interruption, but were annoyed with a great deal of objection until the building was completed.

The cornerstone was laid by the grand master of Masons on Monday, June 22, 1908, and the building was finished February 10, 1909, but was not occupied until March 13, on account of the new furniture and jail fixtures not arriving before that time.

The formal opening of the building was on March 17, 1909, when the Casper band furnished music, and a reception was held from 3 o'clock until 5 in the afternoon, and, although it was declared that "everybody in town" was at the reception, those who made such a strong resistance against the building being erected on this site, must have been out of town that day, for they were not at the reception.

But even after the new building was occupied the rancorous feeling had not been smothered and on November 9, 1909, Judge Carey wrote a letter to the board of county commissioners in which he said that "upon examining the location of the new court house in Casper we find that you have used a street that was dedicated by us for public uses, without our consent. You have also destroyed the means of ingress and egress to property belonging to us in blocks fifty-four



and fifty-five. We are entitled to some compensation for this and we want to hear your proposition and what you propose to do."

In due time an agreement was reached between the board of county commissioners and Mr. Carey as to the price he should have for his lots upon which the court house was built and the amount of damage to blocks fifty-four and fifty-five, because of the closing of Center street. The county commissioners informed the men who had agreed to bear all the expense of the amount to be paid to Mr. Carey and the bondsmen raised the money and turned it over to the county commissioners; the county commissioners then paid Mr. Carey, and thus ended for all time the Natrona county court house controversy.

### NATRONA COUNTY'S PUBLIC LIBRARY

Natrona County's Public Library ranks with the public schools as being an institution that is indispensable and of untold benefit, and although it is very liberally patronized and no doubt greatly appreciated by the general public, it does not receive the financial support that it deserves. While it is conducted along economical lines that are not equaled by the county or city governments, or even by the schools of the county, the annual appropriations made for its support and maintenance are very meager, compared with the enlightenment, entertainment and benefit it returns. Donations, appropriations and "drives" are continually being made in the county for the support of some worthy cause, but never yet has the public library of this county received any consideration except the annual appropriation made by the board of county commissioners, which is provided by the statutes of the state.

A public library was first established in Casper late in the fall of 1902, by the local Women's Christian Temperance Union. The books were few and they occupied some shelves in a small building located on the east side of Center street, between Second and First. Although the number of books was limited, there was a sufficient number at that time to supply the demand. This library was conducted by the ladies of the organization above named for about a year, when, on November 3, 1903, the Natrona County Public Library association was organized, and F. E. Matheny, N. S. Bristol and W. S. Kimball were appointed trustees. An annual levy of not less than one-eighth of a mill and not more than one-half of a mill of the assessed valuation of the county for the establishment and maintenance of such a library was provided by the state statutes, which also provided that the county must own its own building and books. The statutes further provided that "the board of trustees

must keep a strict account of all the association's property and make a complete report to the board of county commissioners at the end of each year. The books of the library must be non-political, non-sectarian and only twenty-five per cent of them fiction. All the books must be of a character that would inform the mind and improve the character of the reader. The library must be free to the residents of the county."

The library association at that time did not own a building, but arrangements were made for the use of the building and books owned by the Women's Christian Temperance Union. But little interest was taken in the institution and probably not a dozen books were borrowed in a month's time, and the board of trustees and the association in a short time became inactive. The annual appropriations were made regularly and a fund of several hundred dollars was accumulated, no part of which was used for several years.

In the summer of 1906 some of the county's enterprising citizens conceived the idea that there should be a public library building in the city of Casper, not that there was at that time any particular need or demand for such a building or a library, but if some outside philanthropist would furnish the money it would give to the town a building to which we could point with pride. Accordingly Andrew Carnegie was appealed to for the money, and he agreed to give \$10,000 toward the erection of a building, provided the town of Casper would agree to make an annual appropriation of \$1,000 for its maintenance. The agreement was entered into between the town of Casper and Mr. Carnegie. C. A. Randall was then Casper's only architect, and he drew the plans and specifications for the building, which were approved by the town council and were then forwarded to Mr. Carnegie for his approval. They were returned with Mr. Carnegie's approval, and on September 30, 1906, Charles Galusha was awarded the contract for the erection of the building, the price being \$10,375. Work was commenced upon the building at once, but on account of the many changes that were necessarily made in the plans and specifications there was considerable additional expense to the original contract and much delay in completing the building. For more than two years the contractor was hampered by changes and additional expense, and by this time the appropriation of \$10,000 was exhausted and the building far from being finished. An appeal was made to Mr. Carnegie for more funds, and under certain conditions he agreed to donate \$3,000 more with which to complete the building, and at a meeting of the Casper town council, held January 23, 1909, a resolution was adopted to the effect that "Andrew Carnegie has offered to donate to the town of Casper,

Wyoming, an additional sum of three thousand dollars for the purpose of completing the Carnegie library, upon condition that the town annually raise three hundred dollars, in addition to that already pledged, for the support and maintenance of the said library, therefore, we do hereby pledge the said town of Casper to raise three hundred dollars, in addition to the amount already pledged, for the support and maintenance of the said public library, to be raised annually, and expended for that purpose." Work on the building was resumed and there were encouraging prospects that it would be completed without delay.

On April 8, 1909, the board of county commissioners appointed C. H. Townsend, C. C. P. Webel and J. E. Schulte as the board of directors of the Natrona County Library association, giving them charge of the library fund, and directing them to purchase furniture, fix the salary for the librarian and hire a librarian. This board was organized July 1, 1909, with J. E. Schulte, chairman; C. H. Townsend, treasurer; C. C. P. Webel, secretary. In August Mr. Webel resigned as secretary and member of the board, and Harold Banner was appointed to fill the vacancy.

It was discovered by this time that the town of Casper could not fulfill its part of the agreement in raising funds for the maintenance of the institution, and on the first of November, 1909, the town of Casper, by a resolution adopted by the town council, presented to Natrona county the Carnegie library building, which even at that time was still far from being completed and ready for occupancy. Natrona county, through its board of county commissioners, accepted the gift from the town, and on the third of November the members of the board of directors of the library were instructed to furnish the building and have it in condition for occupancy as soon as possible and appoint a librarian.

To some people living in Casper this did not appear to be legal, nor did they deem it just to Mr. Carnegie, and the matter of finishing, furnishing and occupying the building was in *status quo* until February 2, 1910, when a resolution was adopted by the board of county commissioners "authorizing the Natrona County Public Library association to take charge of and assume control of the Carnegie Public Library building, situated in the town of Casper, and to open and manage the same as provided by law," and it was further ordered that the "Natrona County Public Library association, as soon as practicable, take charge of, open and maintain the said Carnegie Public Library building as the free public library of Natrona county, Wyoming, and that said association cause to be placed in said library building all library property and books belonging to Natrona county."

The thirteen thousand dollars donated by Mr. Carnegie for the building had by this time been expended, and the building was yet a long way from being completed, and of course could not be opened for public use.

Complaint had been made by Casper's "Trouble Makers' Club," of which the membership consisted of about a half a dozen men who on numerous occasions had previously attempted to thwart movements that would add to the progress and upbuilding of the town, and one of the men even appealed to Mr. Carnegie to "send an attorney here and enforce your contract, and cause the library to be opened." Mr. Carnegie paid no attention to the complaint.

The library board could not, under the Wyoming statutes, expend tax funds to complete the building, but the attorney general of Wyoming advised the trustees that they could legally expend such funds as were at their command for repairs on the building, but, he advised, "If the sentiment of the community is in favor of using the tax funds for completing the building, I would not suppose there would be any serious objections."

The work of "repairing" the building was then commenced, under the supervision of the county library trustees, but it was not in condition to be occupied until the middle of May. On the evening of May 20, 1910, the trustees of the association and the ladies of the Casper Civic Club were hosts and hostesses at the formal opening of the building, the reception to the public being held from 8:30 until 9:30, after which there was dancing until midnight. The next day, Saturday, May 21, the library was opened to the public, with Mrs. Sarah Place as librarian. There were but a few books on the shelves, and there were but few calls for those on hand. Many fixtures were to be added to the interior of the building and a heating plant had not yet been installed; there was no sidewalk in front of the building and the grounds had not yet been cleared of the rubbish, but with the aid of the Civic Club, the town council, the library trustees and some of the public-spirited citizens, all these things were accomplished before the cold weather in the fall approached.

During the six months ending December 31, 1910, the trustees expended \$776 for furniture; \$300 for plumbing; \$309 for books, and \$500 for a heating plant. During the same period the librarian had let out 2,805 books, and \$16.45 in fines had been collected. During the year 1915, 16,218 books were loaned, and the receipts from all sources were \$2,657.88, with \$2,192.76 expended. In 1918, 18,632 books were loaned, and 1,180 new books were purchased. The fines amounted to \$75.25. During 1921, there were 63,331 books loaned and 2,338 new books purchased. The daily average

attendance at the library, including active borrowers of books and reading room visitors, was 396. Books were sent to the schools of Salt Creek, Kasoming, Ohio Camp, Poison Spider, Alcova, and other schools in the county, which were not included in the number reported loaned during the year. A children's room has been established in the library where there are many carefully selected books and pictures, with stereopticon views. The children's story hour is made most interesting and instructive by well-trained story tellers. The hours have been extended to the public and an assistant and an apprentice are required in addition to the librarian. It is noted with satisfaction that no changes have been made either in the personnel of the board of trustees or the librarian except in cases of death or their departure from the county. On January 1, 1922, the trustees were C. H. Townsend, J. W. Johnson and Miss May Hamilton. Mrs. Effie C. Rogers was appointed librarian June 1, 1919, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mrs. Place. Mrs. Rogers is assisted in her work by Clara C. Douds, assistant librarian; Frances Giblin, children's librarian; Floyd Mann, page; Cathryn Cole, apprentice.

In his report to the board of county commissioners in January, 1922, Mr. Townsend, the treasurer of the library board, said: "When the library was accepted from the town of Casper by Natrona county, there was scarcely an armful of books, and the building was unfinished. At the present time this library has very comfortable quarters, although it is somewhat limited in space for the rapidly growing community. The number of books has been increased from almost nothing to nearly 12,000 volumes. During the past twelve years the library association has had an average of \$3,000 per annum to meet the expenses, but the expenses have always been kept within the limit of the receipts. With the coming year we hope the funds will be increased which will enable us to increase our service by giving the public longer hours and the purchase of a greater number of books than we have heretofore been able to buy. The trustees have always conducted the library on an economical basis and have spent only the money that seemed necessary. On account of the increased patronage of the library, it will be but a short time until the building must be enlarged which will be in keeping with the rapidly growing community."

During the year 1922 new steel bookcases were installed, which allowed a much closer classification of the books and better arrangement on the shelves. On January 1, 1923, the library had 14,413 books accessioned, an increase of 3,785 during the year. The daily attendance at the library, including active borrowers and reading



room visitors, averaged 398. The number of books loaned during the year was 74,162, an increase of 10,831 over the previous year. In contrast to the above report, these figures are taken from the report of 1910:

	1910	1922
Number of books in library.....	850	14,413
Largest daily circulation.....	50	651
Books checked during year.....	1,000	74,162
Number of books purchased.....	100	3,785
Fines and damages collected.....	\$20.00	\$621.11

### NATRONA COUNTY'S PUBLIC HOSPITAL

Hugh L. Patton, Natrona county's representative in the house of the legislature in 1909, introduced a bill for an appropriation of \$22,500 from the state of Wyoming for the erection, equipment and management of a branch of the Wyoming General Hospital, to be located in the town of Casper, Natrona county. Without a dissenting vote the bill passed the house and the senate, and with the governor's approval it was enacted into law. A provision in the bill specified that the town of Casper should furnish to the state a proper site for the institution without cost.

But little time was lost after the legislature adjourned in carrying out the provisions of the act. The members of the state board of Charities and Reform, whose duty it was to select a site, award the contract and buy the equipment for the building, made a visit to Casper on the 12th of April, 1909, and, with the members of the town council and a committee from the Casper Industrial Club, after making a thorough survey of the town, all agreed that block 32, in Park addition, would be an ideal location for the hospital. J. M. Carey & Brother had donated this piece of ground to the town of Casper for park purposes, but it was said that Mr. Carey had consented to allow it to be used for the hospital. It was presumed that the decision to locate the building on this block settled the matter, and the state board returned to Cheyenne and immediately made arrangements to have the plans and specifications drawn for the building, and the prospects seemed encouraging that the town of Casper would have at least one public building erected without delay and without a jangle among our citizens, but the bright dream was soon disturbed by the gentleman who so kindly donated the strip of ground to the town to be used for park purposes. On the 26th of August the mayor of Casper received a letter from Mr. Carey's agent to the effect that "while Judge Carey was willing to give some charitable organization a site for a

hospital, he would not, either directly or indirectly, donate a site to the town of Casper, the county of Natrona, or the state of Wyoming. The reason he would not give a site for the hospital was that he thought he had been unjustly treated in the matter of taxation, and until that was righted no favors might be expected from him."

Past experiences with Mr. Carey convinced the people of Casper that an attempt to buy the ground, or to appeal for a reconsideration in the withdrawal of the block for a hospital site would be useless, and arrangements were made between the town of Casper and Henry L. White for a tract of land 300x420 feet on East Second street, between Washington and Conwell streets. A deed for this tract was given to the state; the plans and specifications were finished, but there was a misunderstanding between the state board of Charities and Reform as to whether the state or the town of Casper would furnish and maintain the institution, and on December 4, 1909, Governor B. B. Brooks, State Auditor LeRoy Grant and State Superintendent A. D. Cook, three members of the state board of Charities and Reform, came to Casper and conferred with the members of the Casper Industrial Club regarding the construction of the building. The governor, who acted as spokesman for the state board, said that the people of Casper had done all they agreed to do in regard to selecting the site and giving to the state a deed for the land, but he understood that the people of Casper were willing to furnish and maintain the institution. If this were true, the state could spend the full amount, \$22,500, appropriated for the construction of a building, but if the state were to furnish and maintain the institution, only about \$16,000 could be used for the building. Spokesmen for the Casper Industrial Club said that many people objected to the institution being equipped and maintained by the town of Casper or Natrona county; that they felt that because they had always been liberal in such matters was no reason that they should be imposed upon, and it was their opinion that the state should furnish the building and maintain the institution the same as it did the hospitals at Rock Springs and Sheridan. After considerable discussion, it was finally decided to use the full amount appropriated for the building and take a chance on the next legislature making an additional appropriation for the furnishing and maintenance of the institution.

Early in January, 1910, the contract for the building of the hospital was awarded to Archie Allison of Cheyenne, and W. F. Henning of Casper was given the contract for the installation of the plumbing and heating apparatus. Construction work was commenced in March, 1910, and the building was completed and accepted

by the state on August 31 of the same year, but the institution was not equipped or furnished and no superintendent had been appointed, and no funds were available with which to furnish and maintain the institution. A watchman was put in charge of the vacant building until the convening of the next session of the legislature, when it was hoped that an appropriation would be made with which to equip and maintain the institution.

Governor Brooks, as well as the other members of the state board of Charities and Reform, retired on the first of January, 1911, by reason of the expiration of their terms in office, and Joseph M. Carey, who had heretofore displayed his opposition to the hospital, the town of Casper and Natrona county, became governor of the state.

At the session of the legislature in January, 1911, a bill was introduced and passed both the house and senate appropriating the sum of \$12,500 for the purpose of maintaining and furnishing the hospital. The governor vetoed the bill, but an appropriation of a similar amount was incorporated in another bill which, if vetoed, would have had a disastrous effect upon other state institutions, and after it passed the house and senate it also received the approval of the governor. It then only remained for the state board of Charities and Reform to come to Casper and have a few minor repairs made to the building, buy the furniture, appoint a superintendent and put the hospital in operation, but the governor's time was so completely taken up with other affairs of state that he could not come to Casper with the other members of the board, and the building remained unoccupied, except for the presence of the watchman, who had furnished for himself a room in the basement.

On August 3, 1911, State Auditor Robert Forsythe and Miss Martha Converse (now Mrs. W. S. Kimball), came to Casper with the authority and for the purpose of letting contracts to finish the building and to furnish and equip the same and get it in shape to be operated. The building was completed and furnished and ready for occupancy the latter part of October, and on the 30th was formally opened for business, with Miss Converse as superintendent. It was operated as a state institution until January 1, 1922.

At the session of the legislature in 1921 a bill was introduced and became a law giving to the counties in which state hospitals are located the privilege of purchasing them for the sum of one dollar, the purchase price being nominal, and merely sufficient to constitute an exchange which prevents the state from violating the constitution. The exchange included the building, lands and all equipment and supplies on hand. On January 1, 1922, Natrona



county paid to the state of Wyoming the purchase price of one dollar, and the title was changed from the Casper Branch of the Wyoming General Hospital to the Natrona County Hospital, since which time it has been under the direction of the board of county commissioners.

During the summer of 1922 a contract was let by the board of county commissioners for the erection of a nurses' home, to be the property of the county, in connection with the county hospital. The new building consists of nine rooms and two baths and is sufficient to accommodate eighteen nurses. Work was commenced on the building the latter part of September and was finished in November. The building cost about \$14,000, and is located about fifty feet south of the hospital building. With the completion of this building Natrona county affords hospital accommodations equal to any county in the state of Wyoming.

### RAILROADS IN NATRONA COUNTY

The first railroad passenger train that came into Natrona county according to schedule arrived in Casper on June 15, 1888. The end of the road at that time was about a mile east from where the present passenger station is located. The "old town," or temporary location of Casper, was a short distance to the northwest from where the railroad track ended. A big celebration was had that day and night by the citizens of Casper and the passengers who remained over. How they celebrated can be imagined from the fact that Casper was then a typical frontier "cow town." A regular passenger train service was established after a short time, but this service was abandoned in 1892, and after that the passengers reached here on an "accommodation," or combination train.

After about ten years, passenger train service was, on May 11, 1903, re-established between Chadron and Casper on the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railway, which is now the Chicago & Northwestern Railway. The train was due to arrive in town at 1 o'clock, and there were gathered at the depot to welcome it the mayor and members of the town council, the president and executive committee of the Chamber of Commerce, the Casper Gun Club (all of whom had their guns with them), and about three hundred citizens. The greater portion of the male population had six-shooters in their belts. The whistle at the electric light plant gave the signal when the passenger train arrived within the town limits and immediately ten anvils were fired, which caused a vibration sufficient to break the windows in several of the business houses of the town. When the

train arrived at the depot more than a hundred shots were fired from shot guns, rifles and six-shooters, and one or two of the tenderfoot passengers became frightened and refused to come from the coach until they were assured by the conductor that the citizens would do them no harm, but that this was the manner in which they wished to show their appreciation of the improved train service into a western frontier town at the end of the road. The train consisted of three passenger coaches and a combination baggage and mail car. When it departed from Chadron at 5 o'clock in the morning there were thirty-eight passengers on board and when it arrived in Casper at 1 o'clock in the afternoon there were twelve passengers. In commenting upon the improved train service the local newspaper said:

"What a joyful awakening there was in Casper Monday, May 11, 1903, when the toot of the first passenger train was heard. As it flew into the station whistles blew, anvils were fired and the din from hundreds of guns, adding to the noise, must have convinced the incoming passengers that something out of the ordinary was transpiring. The train was on time too, which was something comparatively new in railroad annals at Casper. The mayor and town council were there, county officials, members of the Chamber of Commerce and citizens of the town and county in general had gathered for the event. The Northwestern could not but be impressed with the welcome accorded the new service. For years the people of Central Wyoming have begged, entreated, argued with, cajoled, threatened, fought, cursed and raved; have leveled shafts of advice, irony, venom and vitriol, at the mis-managers of the road — tons of ink and bushels of gray matter have been used to show the officials the error of their ways, but all to no avail, but at last our dreams and hopes have come true."

Many tales have been told concerning the train service before the passenger train was put on, some true and some exaggerated, but it is a fact that the train was often stopped between stations while the train crew went out on the plains and hunted sage chickens, and the passengers, anxious to reach their destination, remained in the coach and slept or cursed, as best suited their fancy. In the winter time when there were heavy snow storms, train service was abandoned sometimes for three and four days, but whenever the train did arrive there were always a great many people at the station to meet and welcome it and the few passengers aboard were always thankful to arrive, even though they were always far behind the schedule.

Casper was the terminus of this road until the spring of 1905, when work was commenced in May on the extension to Lander. Many were of the opinion that the building of the road farther west would cripple Casper in a business way and some of the business men followed the road to Shoshoni, Riverton, and some of the other newly-established towns, but it was not long before those who left us realized their error. Casper commenced to grow in a business way

and increase in population and has steadily advanced ever since the extension of the railroad to Lander.

Construction work on the extension of the Chicago & Northwestern Railway from Casper to Lander was commenced on Monday, May 2, 1905. The end of the track from 1888 until this time was several hundred yards west from where the roundhouse is located. Train service was established to Casper from the west whenever the rails were laid into one of the new stations. Cadoma, 12.1 miles from Casper, was the first station, which was established in August, 1905; this station, which has but few dwelling houses, and no business houses, but has large sheep shearing pens, has the convenience of two railroads, and it is burdened with two names; it is Cadoma on the Northwestern, and Bishop on the Burlington. Rails were laid into Seminole, the name afterwards being changed to Bucknum, 22.4 miles west, on November 13, and on that date a daily passenger train service was established between this point and Casper. Natrona, 32.1 miles from Casper; Powder River, 41.1 miles; Mokoma, afterwards changed to Waltman, 53.2 miles; Wolton, 62.8 miles; Richards, 73.2 miles; Moneta, 82.5 miles; Ocla, 93 miles, and Shoshoni, 103.1 miles west from Casper, required more than a year in the building of the line. Passenger train service between Casper and Shoshoni was established on Monday, July 3, 1906. The train consisted of three passenger coaches, one mail and baggage car, and all the freight cars that were required to haul the freight that was consigned to any of the stations along the route. This train left Casper daily, except Sunday, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and arrived at noon. Passenger train service was established between Casper and Lander, a distance of 148.1 miles, on Wednesday, October 17, 1906.

A great many of the people living at Lander had never seen a train of cars until this train came into the station. Some of the citizens came into the country before there were any railroads in the central part of the state, and as they had no occasion to make a trip to Casper or Rawlins, which were their nearest railroad points, the distance to each point being about the same, they were content to do their traveling in a buckboard or on horseback. Others were born there and never had occasion to go out of the confines of the county. One old fellow, when he learned that the train was to come into Lander that day, immediately went to the station, and when informed that the train would not arrive for several hours, remarked that he had been waiting sixty-five years to see a train of railroad cars, and he guessed he could wait now with patience for several hours.

When the train arrived it was immediately surrounded with a throng of curious, excited men, women and children who looked upon the engine especially with awe and admiration. When the people were the most interested and were listening to an explanation and description of the mechanism of the locomotive, by a man who had seen a railroad train several times before, the engineer put his head out of the cab window and called out: "Stand back, for I am now going to turn this train around." There was immediately a great scattering, and it did not dawn upon them for some time that the train could not be turned around on a single track. In a beautiful description of how the people felt about the railroad invading the confines of Lander, Cora V. Wesley, editor of the *Mountaineer*, the weekly newspaper of that town, said: "Tears trickled down our cheeks and sadness crept over the household because the rural beauties of the western life were to sink into the great abyss of the past. Real, genuine tears of grief and joy chasing each other in mad confusion, trying to gain the victory."

The most disastrous and death-dealing accident that ever occurred on the Chicago & Northwestern Railway system in Wyoming was the wreck that took place on Sunday night, shortly after 9 o'clock, March 19, 1906, about twenty-six miles northwest of Casper, which resulted in the death of ten men and the injury of sixteen. The wrecked train was an extra which left Powder River station about 8 o'clock in the evening, and consisted of a new model heavy engine, two large water cars, a tool car, and two way cars. The twenty-six men who were either killed or injured were in the front way car. The scene of the accident was where the railroad crossed the old channel of Casper creek, where a four-foot culvert had been placed under the track, and this had been washed out in the afternoon of that day, leaving only the rails and ties over a chasm about twelve feet wide and eighteen feet deep. The train was being run at a moderate rate of speed when this point was reached and the engineer could not see that the earth had been washed away. The engine, tender and two water cars passed over the unsupported rails in safety, but the way car in which the workmen were riding broke through, the front end of the car tipping into the channel, and as the car went down the men and everything in the car were thrown in a heap to the front end. The tool car, which was at the rear of the way car, broke in the middle at the edge of the channel, half of the car, with its contents, piling on top of the way car. The engine, after passing over the chasm, broke loose from its tender, straddled the rails and went ahead a short distance, but the two heavy water cars had broken loose and came back on the track and fell in the channel on top of







the way car where the men were pinioned. These water cars, as they fell into the channel, broke through the way car and no doubt were the cause of the death and injury of most of the men. The trainmen who were in the rear way car, which did not leave the track, were powerless at first to render assistance to the unfortunate men who were pinned beneath tons of heavy wreckage and were in the midst of the muddy, roaring, rushing stream. The awful cries of the poor unfortunate men caused some of the men who were looking on to faint, while others were so shocked and bewildered that they were speechless and dumb for the first few minutes, and then, to add to the horror of the situation, the wreckage caught fire. The horror-stricken men who were on the bank lighted torches and, assisted by the light of a few lanterns, succeeded in getting down to the edge of the water among the wreckage, and by dipping water in their hats and soaking their coats and throwing them on the flames, in a short time succeeded in extinguishing the blaze.

A heavy, wet snow was falling and the weather was intensely cold, and this added to the suffering of the injured men and the discomfiture of the rescuers. Holes were chopped through the floor of the car in which the men were fastened and the timbers were cleared away as much as possible, but the cold and stormy weather, and the pitch-dark night handicapped the rescuers. Twice more the wreckage caught on fire during the night, but through the heroic efforts of the men the flames were extinguished, and when daylight came all the injured men had been rescued and four of the men who had been killed had been removed from the wreckage.

The news of the disaster was received in Casper at about 10 o'clock that night, less than an hour after it occurred, and at 11 o'clock a train was made up with about forty men on board, consisting of all the available doctors in town, railroad officials and workmen, but on account of the weakened condition of the bridge across the Platte river, a mile west from town, the train could not cross. A number of hand cars were then secured and most of the men started for the scene of the wreck by this means of transportation. At 1 o'clock in the morning they had traveled but twelve miles through the heavy, blinding snowstorm, and the hand cars were abandoned and the men started to walk the balance of the distance, sixteen miles, through snow, slush and mud. Many fell by the wayside and others had to be assisted along the route. After traveling all night Father Bryant was the first to arrive at the scene of the wreck at about 7:30 in the morning. He at once baptised the injured men who desired it and he gave words of cheer and comfort to all the sufferers. Superintendent J. P. Cantillon and Drs. Dean and



Gillam were not far behind and they dressed and cared for the wounded as best they could, until Dr. Keith and Dr. Morgan and two doctors from Douglas, who came to Casper on a special train, arrived in a buggy at about 9 o'clock, and they assisted in the care of the injured men.

The Platte River bridge was repaired as soon as possible, and at 10 o'clock in the morning a relief train left Casper, but on account of the bad condition of the track very slow time was made and it did not arrive at the scene of the wreck until about 1 o'clock in the afternoon. The injured men were taken into this train and placed on cots and the men who had worked all night and half of the day without food or drink were provided with hot coffee, meat and bread. The relief train returned to Casper at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and the bodies of the men were taken to the undertakers' and the injured men were taken to the annex of the Episcopal church where an emergency hospital had been established.

Among the killed was Charles Moll, who had been an employee of the railroad company for about ten years. J. W. Price, who was assistant to Mr. Moll, was also killed. D. B. Blue, section foreman at Cadoma, was also among the killed, and the other seven who were killed and all the injured were Servians who had come to Casper a few months before to work on the railroad extension from Casper to Lander. The railroad company paid all the expense of having the injured men cared for and in addition gave each man \$100. To the relatives of the Servians \$1,000 was given for each man killed, and to the families of Charles Moll, D. B. Blue and J. W. Price \$3,500 was given.

The burning of a bridge two and one-half miles east from Wolton until there were only a few charred embers remaining of the structure was the cause of another wreck at about 2:15 Sunday afternoon, September 9, 1917, and E. R. Anderson, engineer, and Frank Cross, fireman, were killed. When the train approached the bridge there was no visible indication from the engine cab that the framework of the structure had been destroyed and the engine plunged down a seventeen-foot embankment and the sixty-foot span immediately gave way. Seven freight cars came over the embankment on top of the engine and the chasm was completely covered with wreckage. The trainmen made an effort to rescue the engine men but their efforts were unsuccessful, and one of them walked back to Wolton and had word sent to Casper to have the wrecking and construction crews come out and clear the debris and build a temporary bridge, while the others remained at the scene of the wreck to extinguish a fire of the wreckage should one be started from the

coals in the fire box of the engine. The bodies of the engineer and fireman were brought to Casper and the railroad company made every effort to find the parties who caused the fire, but they were never apprehended. It was thought that tramps built a fire under the bridge in order to keep warm, and then went away and left it, and the upright timbers were burned unknown to anyone.

Early in October, 1897, Thomas S. Moffat, of Chicago, superintendent of construction of the Wyoming & Northwestern Railroad, wrote a letter to the publisher of the *Wyoming Derrick*, published at Casper, saying, "I am pleased to tell you that the building of the Wyoming & Northwestern Railroad west from Casper is a fixed fact, and operations will be begun just as soon as the detail of getting material together can be arranged." This was the company which filed articles of incorporation with the county clerk in Casper in the spring of 1897, defining the route from Casper to the western boundary of Natrona county, or, more particularly, to Ervay, at the foot of the Rattlesnake mountains. "It is strange, indeed," commented the local newspaper, "that the Rattlesnake oil basin has not long since been opened to the world, and would have been, had not the financial stringency of the past five years through which the country has been passing hindered. Regarding the Rattlesnake petroleum, and its high standard of value, needs but a reference to Professor Taylor, the celebrated Standard Oil company's chemist; to Professor Aughey, the distinguished Wyoming oil chemist; Wyner and Harland, public assayists, London, England, and scores of other reliable chemists of the United States, Germany, Holland, France, and Canada." The proposed railroad was to have extended sixty miles from Casper, its main purpose being to transport the oil from the Rattlesnake oil fields to Casper. The people of Casper, however, did not become very enthusiastic or excited over the proposed new railroad, and like many of the numerous other railroads, its construction was wholly on paper.

For twenty-five years there was but one railroad in Natrona county. The Chicago & Northwestern Railroad company hauled all the freight, mail, express and passengers in and out of Casper from June 15, 1888, until October 20, 1913, then the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy railway service was established, and Casper was considered the largest railroad center in Wyoming.

A temporary survey was made by the Burlington company for its line through Natrona county in the fall of 1909, but the question of building the road was not definitely settled until December of that year, when the real estate agent for the company bought eighty acres of land in the extreme northern part of the town from W. F.

Dunn, Eugene McCarthy and Patrick Sullivan, forty acres northeast of town from J. F. Stanley and twenty acres northeast of town from W. A. Blackmore and John Cosgrove. The land north of town was considered at that time worth \$250 per acre, but the land agent of the railroad company declared that he would pay but \$100 per acre for it, and if he could not purchase it at that price the railroad company would build its station a mile east from town. The owners of the land finally reduced the price to \$150 per acre, and the citizens of the town subscribed enough money so the railroad company got the land for \$100 per acre and the owners received \$150 per acre. After the agreement for the sale of the land had been made it was announced by the railroad officials that Casper would be a general division station; that the machine shops would be located here, and that "the people of Casper would have no regrets that the Burlington system was going to become a part of the community."

This was considered the greatest addition the town had had since the Chicago & Northwestern had been built into Casper, and the people were greatly encouraged, and it was predicted that the town would increase from a population of less than 3,000 to at least 7,000 inside of one year after the road was in operation; that many new lines of business would be established here and that a second railroad was all we required to make this the great metropolis of Wyoming. There was then scarcely a house on the land purchased by the Burlington company, and now there are more than a thousand dwelling houses on the land north of the track, in addition to the many stores, shops and buildings of other kinds, among which are two fine school buildings which accommodate more than six hundred pupils.

The contract was awarded by the Burlington for the building of its grade from Powder River station to a point sixteen miles east from Casper on February 25, 1910, but construction work was discontinued during the month of December, 1910, when the rails were laid through the canyon east from Thermopolis to a point near the Boysen dam, and work was not resumed until the spring of 1913. A contract was let on February 10, 1913, for the building of 140 miles of track, from Powder River to Orin Junction. After this contract was let the work was pushed as rapidly as possible, and on September 23, 1913, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the first rail within the limits of Casper on this road was spiked to the ties. The laying of this rail in the limits of the town was witnessed by about fifty citizens, and after that most important event they came uptown and celebrated the occasion as such events were usually celebrated in those days.

Passenger train service between Billings and Casper was established on October 20, 1913, the first train coming in from the west at 7 o'clock in the evening. The service was tri-weekly, and the train departed from Casper on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 7 o'clock in the morning and arrived on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 7 o'clock in the evening. Two boxcars were fitted up and used as a passenger, freight and express depot at that time.

The work of laying the rails from Casper to Origin Junction, a distance of sixty-eight miles, was commenced on June 26, 1914, the connection being made the middle of October, and through passenger train service from Billings, Montana, to Denver, Colorado, was established October 19, 1914. By this time a frame building had been erected in Casper which was later used as a freight office, but was then used as a passenger depot. Work was commenced on the excavation for the foundation of the \$100,000 passenger depot May 27, 1915, and the building was formally opened on the evening of February 3, 1916. The Casper band furnished the music, refreshments were served and it was estimated that more than four thousand people went through the building during the evening. The hopes and anticipations of the people at that time of Casper becoming the chief city of the state have more than come true and the citizens surely can have "no regrets that the Burlington railway system has become a part of the community."

The railroad mileage in Natrona county is 170.18, with the Chicago & Northwestern covering 85.35, and the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy covering 84.83 miles.

### SOME HOT COUNTY POLITICS

For twenty years after Natrona county had been organized, from 1890 to 1910, there was always a bitter contest between the republicans and democrats during election time. During the heat of battle, political lines were closely drawn and the forces on either side left nothing undone to gain favor for their candidates. Every precinct in the county was visited by the candidates on each side and every voter in every precinct received a friendly call. The campaign always wound up in a blaze of glory with a big torchlight procession on the streets of Casper and speaking and singing in the town hall. After the speaking there was always a dance at which the candidates and workers on both sides participated. As an example of how they did things in those days, herewith is a brief description of the demonstration at the close of the campaign in 1896:

Saturday night before election, after the arrival of the train a parade formed at the wool warehouse. It was headed by Grand Marshal W. H. Duhling, followed by the Douglas Military band. Then came a procession of beautiful floats, ladies in carriages and men carrying transparencies, banners, torches and discharging fireworks. Among the many attractive floats was that of "The Good Ship Protection, Captain McKinley," being a large ship under full sail, designed by H. A. Lilly. Another by Kenneth McDonald was "The Campaign of '96," showing McKinley in the large end and Bryan crawling out of the little end. Another float showed two ladies operating spinning wheels, using Wyoming wool; another float by F. W. Okie showed his shearers at work. One, the McKinley shearer, was well-dressed; the other, a Bryan shearer, poorly clad. Wm. Clark's coach and four was covered with appropriate mottoes, and on the top stood a protected sheepman and a free wool sheepman, each suitably dressed. The "Goddess of Liberty" float was the handsomest feature of the parade. The Goddess was appropriately attired with a shield and scales, and surrounded by fifty little girls in white.

An imposing feature of the parade was fifty-two decorated carriages, each containing from three to six ladies. After them came the flambeau club, 100 strong. They were armed with Roman candles, and a stream of fire constantly shot heavenward. Here and there red tableau fire burned, making the parade look the more imposing. The last of the procession was "Butler's Brigade" of 100 boys carrying torches and blowing tin horns. Dwight Seely and Jack Titler made the anvils roar, while Jeff Crawford fired seven-inch cannon crackers continually. Among the amusing features was Jay Wilcox and his bear, John Ambruster and his dog, and Charles Hewes representing a hayseed. Then there were Uncle Sams, kings and queens, gold men and silver men, and an endless variety of characters. There were not less than 500 people in the parade, and over 200 horses were used to haul the floats and wagons. Over 500 twenty-ball Roman candles, 100 pounds of tableau fire and 500 seven-inch cannon crackers were burned during the parade.

Only a small part of the procession could gain admission to the hall, so great was the crowd. Those who did were entertained by the McKinley quartette with "Wyoming Will Be in Line," Chairman Bradley introduced Judge Carey and the judge made a most convincing argument. The quartette then sang a song on local candidates. When the meeting was over the dancers enjoyed themselves until nearly morning.

The democratic candidates and their workers were by no means idle, and among other things, they issued circulars and distributed them throughout the several precincts of the county. In these circulars the republican candidates and many of the republican workers of the county were arraigned in a rather caustic manner, which caused them considerable embarrassment, but the criticism was the means of the republicans putting forth a more determined effort for success, and there were very few successful democratic candidates at the polls that election.

At the time the republicans made their nominations of candidates for the several county offices there was not always unanimity among the brethren. There were two factions, generally, and the county convention in the fall of 1898 went down in history as the most bitter and hardest-fought political battle ever held in any county in the state between two factions of the same political faith. In those days the Australian ballot system was not in vogue for the nomination of candidates, but primary elections were held in each precinct where delegates were elected. These delegates later attended a



regular nominating convention. In numbers the factions were about equally divided and, therefore, generalship was necessarily the winning factor. In each precinct throughout the county two sets of delegates came up for election, and every available vote was gotten to the polls. After this contest was over, each faction put forth its supreme effort in an attempt to get a majority of the delegates lined up in its favor. In Casper nine delegates were to be elected, and every team and buggy available was gotten out to carry the voters to the polls. Five o'clock was the time set for the closing of the polls and two minutes after five a buggy drove up in front of the polling place with four voters, but they were not allowed to cast a ballot on account of being two minutes late. Had they been allowed to cast their ballots, the whole republican ticket would have been changed.

One hundred eleven voters had exercised their franchise in the Casper precinct and five delegates favoring one faction were elected, while four for the opposite side received a majority. So close was the contest that fifty-nine votes were cast for the delegate receiving the highest number, and fifty-one votes were given to the candidate receiving the lowest number.

At the nominating convention every precinct in the county had its full quota of delegates present. As soon as the convention was called to order every point was contested for supremacy, even to the election of a chairman and secretary and the appointment of committees. After the organization of the convention was accomplished, the work of nominating candidates for the several county offices was begun. The candidate for sheriff was the first to be nominated. D. E. Fitger, O. M. Rice and W. E. Tubbs were the three candidates. On the first ballot each candidate received about an equal number of votes. On the second, third, fourth, and up to the thirty-seventh ballot there was a deadlock. Neither faction would give in to the other. There were twenty-six delegates present and each of the three candidates had received from five to thirteen votes. On the thirty-seventh ballot, Oscar Hiestand received twelve votes and with the next ballot the deadlock was broken and Mr. Hiestand was favored with the nomination by twenty-two votes. Pandemonium then broke loose and both factions claimed a victory.

But another conflict came up in the nomination of a candidate for county clerk. Pledges had been made by all the delegates and when the first ballot was counted M. P. Wheeler was credited with thirteen votes and J. A. Sheffner had the same number. It looked like another deadlock, and a recess of ten minutes was taken. One

of the delegates confidentially declared he had pledged himself to vote for one of the candidates on the first ballot only, and he was unwilling to carry the fight any further. After this declaration was made every effort was put forth to keep the opposition from learning of this delegate's intention, and under no circumstances was he allowed to mingle or communicate with the other side. When the convention was re-convened, the second ballot was immediately ordered and the count gave Mr. Wheeler fourteen and Mr. Sheffner twelve, and this ended the contest. The balance of the ticket was nominated without a contest and thus ended the bitter struggle for supremacy. Both Mr. Hiestand and Mr. Wheeler were elected at the general election. Some of the men on each side who took the most prominent part in the fight, in a few years became the closest friends and many times afterwards took the greatest of pleasure in extending to each other a helping hand either in politics or in personal affairs.

#### FEDERAL CENSUS FOR THIRTY YEARS

The official federal census returns gave Casper and Natrona county's population for 1890, 1900, 1910 and 1920 as follows:

	1890	1900	1910	1920
Natrona county.....	1,094	1,785	4,766	14,635
Casper.....	544	883	2,639	11,447
Muddy precinct.....	....	199	179	....
Bessemer precinct.....	....	72	139	....
Freeland precinct.....	....	240	230	....
Johnstown precinct.....	....	159	338	....
Ervay precinct.....	....	71	80	....
Lone Bear and Powder River precincts.....	....	....	777	....

The census returns for the precincts of Muddy, Bessemer, Freeland, Johnstown, Ervay, Lone Bear and Powder River cannot be given for 1920 on account of the fact that many new precincts were established between the years 1910 and 1920, thereby reducing the territory embraced in the original precincts, and for the further reason that the enumeration districts in 1920 were considerably changed from the previous years, but it will be observed that the population of the county, outside the city of Casper, has shown a substantial increase, for in 1890 the population of the county, exclusive of Casper, was 550; in 1900, the outside precincts had a population of 902; in 1910, the same territory was increased to 2,127, and in 1920, all the precincts in the county, exclusive of Casper, returned a population of 3,188, or a total, including the city of Casper, of 14,635.



## NATRONA COUNTY PIONEER ASSOCIATION

The membership of the Natrona County Pioneer association is composed mostly of the men and women who gave up the comforts of established homes and friendships and came to a "new country." Transportation was difficult in the early days and the pioneers were without many of those things which we nowadays consider absolute necessities. Many of the pioneer women of Natrona county had been reared in comfortable homes, but they bravely endured hardships and sometimes privations without losing any of their womanly charm, or their refinement or their culture.

The work of the early settlers was to organize a town and county and bring in those things necessary to the solid foundation of a prosperous, progressive community. Because of the hardships and privations so courageously faced by these pioneers, it is but proper that they should have an exclusive organization which meets annually, or oftener if desired, and thus strengthen the bonds of friendship.

With this idea in view, the Natrona County Pioneer association was organized on November 12, 1901, with Mrs. W. S. Kimball, president; Mrs. R. L. Carpenter, vice president; Mrs. W. D. Rhoades, secretary; Mrs. P. A. Demorest, treasurer. Those present at the time the association was organized were Mrs. W. S. Kimball, Mrs. W. A. Denecke, Mrs. J. J. Svendsen, Mrs. C. H. Townsend, Mrs. N. S. Bristol, Mrs. Hannah McClure, Mrs. C. C. P. Webel, Mrs. Northington, Mrs. H. L. Patton, Mrs. Lew Seely, Mrs. Wm. Jones, Mrs. David Graham, Mrs. C. E. Hewes, Mrs. P. A. Demorest, Mrs. H. A. Lilly, Mrs. John McGrath, Mrs. A. T. Butler, Mrs. Sarah Stroud, Mrs. C. H. King, Mrs. W. D. Rhoades, Miss Grace Demorest and Miss Etta Butler. Many new members have been added since the association was organized, but the membership was limited to those who came to the county previous to 1895. However, in recent years the by-laws were changed so as to include those who came to the county previous to 1900.

The first annual reunion of the association was held on November 14, 1902, and about 300 men, women, and children were present. Mr. Charles K. Bucknum acted as chairman of this meeting and among the speakers was Hon. Bryant B. Brooks, who said:

"A pioneer is one who goes before and prepares the way for others coming after. Who knows what the future has in store for us? Who would dare lift the veil of futurity? Who can foretell the treasure that may yet pour forth from these surrounding hills? Who knows the secret locked deep beneath the surface of these oil-stained plains? Who guesses at the result to follow the spreading of yonder on-rushing river over thousands upon thousands of acres of deep alluvial soil? Who is sagacious enough to predict the price of live stock, of beef and mutton, when yonder ribbons of steel span

the continent? When six hundred million people in the Orient, and in all the islands of the sea cry to us for food? When our stock trains face west, instead of east. God alone knows, and to God-like souls he gives the larger hope. Standing now in the presence of a miraculous achievement history looks out upon the future and stands dumb.

"Look about you, and see what has been accomplished in fourteen years. Then tell me, oh, ye prophets, what will it be like, when the first half of this new century is history? What sort of people will then inhabit this oasis, in the Great American Desert? I will tell you.

"Women so surpassing fair, that all the world pays homage. Men of vigorous strength, with an unheard of power for effective action, capable of solving the deepest riddles of the ages. Giants, physically, intellectually and morally. Made so by their natural environment. Made so by an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent force. Steadily uplifting every fibre of their bodies, every atom of their souls. Made so by the spirit of these rugged mountains, by the voiceless influence of these matchless plains, by the intoxicating ozone of this high, dry, perfect atmosphere. Made so by Nature's quick and lavish returns for honest toil.

"If there be any here present, who are not Natrona pioneers, to all such, I say: Welcome, thrice welcome, to the best climate, the best state, the best county, the best city, and the best society on earth."

Governor DeForest Richards, Alex T. Butler, William ("Missou") Hines, Patrick Sullivan and others made short addresses, songs were sung by Miss Savilla King and Mrs. B. B. Brooks, and then the following letter from Charles W. Eads was read:

"Thermopolis, May 30, 1902

MRS. W. D. RHOADES, Secretary Natrona County Pioneer association,

"Your kind favor of May 10th is at hand and contents carefully noted, and I will say that I was pleased to hear from you.

"I will tell you that I was the second man that came to Casper. I located there on June 7th, 1888, and when I landed there was just one man there, and that was John Merritt. He was on the bank of the river, and was getting his supper. He was frying his meat on a bent stick and making his coffee in an oyster can. I went up to him and asked if he had any idea where Casper was, and he said he could hardly say, that he had been looking for it about a week.

"I told him to come over and help me put up my tent and he could camp with me. I had a tent and stove and a little grub and he said he would just put in with me. So the next morning we talked over the location, and we set up the first tent of the old Casper, and after that I was familiar with all the transactions of Casper for ten years.

Yours very truly,  
C. W. EADS."

With Mr. Eads when he first came to Casper were his daughter Fannie Eads, his son, Kise Eads, and Abe Nelson and John Johnson. Mr. Eads went to Bessemer to make his home within a year after coming to Casper and later moved to Casper mountain, where he established a mining camp and called it Eadsville. John Johnson was drowned near Douglas in 1897 and Abe Nelson has spent many years on Casper mountain prospecting and is still a resident of this county. Mr. Merritt remained in Casper more than ten years, and then moved to Joplin, Missouri, but returns to Casper occasionally to visit among his old-time friends.



MEMBERS OF THE NATRONA COUNTY PIONEER ASSOCIATION (1906)

From left to right—*Top row:* Mrs. Henry Bayer, Mrs. W. S. Kimball, Mrs. Wm. Jones, Mrs. C. E. Hewes, Mrs. T. A. Dean, Mrs. J. F. Crawford, Mrs. H. L. Patton, Mrs. Harold Banner, Mrs. W. D. Rhoades, Mrs. C. K. Bucknum. *Second row:* Mrs. W. A. Blackmore, Mrs. J. J. Svendsen, Mrs. E. D. Norton, Mrs. P. C. Nicolaysen, Mrs. Sarah Place, Mrs. P. A. Demorest, Mrs. M. L. Bishop, Mrs. W. A. Ford, Mrs. Sarah Stroud, Mrs. D. A. Robertson. *Third row:* Amalia Bostelman, Mrs. C. F. G. Bostelman, Mrs. R. L. Carpenter, Mrs. Robert Osborne, Mrs. Emma Sturgeon, Mrs. C. M. Hawks, Nora Banner. *Fourth row:* Chrissie Carpenter, Ruth Kimball, Wm. Rhoades, Carla Bostelman, Doris Bruce, Helen Banner.



After the reading of this letter an old-time dance was enjoyed; a round-up supper was served at midnight, after which dancing was resumed and continued until an early hour in the morning.

At another annual meeting, held in November, 1906, the following appropriate remarks were made by Mayor W. S. Kimball:

"Pioneering held a certain fascination for the men, which was almost entirely lacking with the women. Pioneering, with the latter, meant hardship, privation and even isolation, and it undoubtedly required greater courage, even greater devotion, and yet greater staying qualities upon the part of the woman than the man. We can never bestow too much praise, too much honor, on the pioneer women, and we rejoice today that most of them are prosperous in the enjoyment of comfortable homes and giving their children every advantage that is given young people elsewhere.

"Show me a pioneer, man or woman, and you have shown me one who possesses qualities which command your respect; one, too, who appears equally well in a log cabin or a gilded mansion; who can in a rough and ready manner meet any danger or emergency that may arise, or in evening gown or in dress suit grace any drawing room."

Annual reunions have been held each year since and occasionally picnics are held in the summer time. With each annual meeting it is observed that some of the members have been called to that "bourne from whence no traveler returns," but as each member goes hence, it is pointed out with satisfaction that he played a part in the building of one of the best towns and most prosperous counties in the west, and although his taking off is regretted, it is but the way of the world; it is God's way.

#### SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR VETERANS

In his message to congress April 11, 1898, among other things President William McKinley said, "In the name of humanity, in the name of civilization, in behalf of endangered American interests, which give us the right and duty to speak and act, the war in Cuba must stop. In view of these facts and these considerations, I ask congress to authorize and empower the president to take measures to secure a full and final termination of hostilities between the government of Spain and the people of Cuba."

In response to the above message, resolutions were adopted on April 18 by the house of representatives and senate as follows:

"1. That the people of the Island of Cuba are, and of right ought to be, free and independent.

"2. That it is the duty of the United States to demand, and the Government of the United States does demand, that the Government of Spain at once relinquish its authority and government in the Island of Cuba, and withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters.

"3. That the president of the United States be, and he hereby is, directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States, and to call into the actual service of the United States the militia of the several states to such an extent as may be necessary to carry these resolutions into effect.

"4. That the United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction or control over said island, except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination when that is accomplished to leave the government and control of the island to its people."

On April 20, Spain was given its ultimatum by the United States to relinquish its authority and withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba before noon on April 23, 1898. Spain refused to comply with this demand, and the president issued a proclamation calling for 125,000 volunteers, "the same to be proportioned, as far as practicable, among the several states and territories and the District of Columbia, according to population and to serve for two years, unless sooner discharged."

On April 25, congress declared that "war had existed since the 21st day of April, 1898, including said day, between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain."

The secretary of war on the 25th notified Governor W. A. Richards that Wyoming's allotment of troops was one battalion of four companies of infantry and that the National Guard should be used as far as their numbers would permit. Companies C of Buffalo, G of Sheridan, F of Douglas, H of Evanston, and a portion of A of Laramie were accepted. These companies assembled in Cheyenne and on May 10 they were mustered into the United States service. On May 18, the battalion left Cheyenne for San Francisco. On June 27 they embarked at San Francisco and arrived at the mouth of Manila Bay July 31. August 6 they were disembarked and went into camp at Paranaque. This battalion participated in the battle of Manila August 13, and was the first to raise its battalion flag over the captured city. Afterwards the Wyoming boys were engaged in numerous battles. July 6, 1899, orders were received to return to the United States and on August 29 the Steamer *Grant* arrived in San Francisco with the battalion. Governor DeForest Richards and his staff, and many prominent citizens of the state went to San Francisco to welcome the boys home.

In the battalion were the following named men from Natrona county: E. A. Cunningham, B. F. Cunningham, C. W. Anderson, W. J. Evans, O. S. Lucas, J. H. Marsh, G. R. Moyer, R. J. White, and Pat McDermott. G. R. Moyer was the only soldier of Natrona



county who did not return. He remained in Manila, married a Filipino, and engaged in business.

W. F. Dunn received a commission ranking as captain on July 6, 1898, and was ordered to report for duty at Tampa, Florida, for duty in the commissary department. He was in the service about two years, the first year being spent at different camps in the south and the last year he spent in Cuba, most of the time in Santiago and Havana and on board the transport *Ingalls*, where he assisted in the work of paying off the Cuban soldiers. Mr. Dunn received his discharge in the summer of 1901 and returned to his home in Casper.

Dr. J. F. Leeper, although not enlisted in the Spanish-American war, served in the Philippine Islands as army physician, with the rank of captain, from February, 1910, until 1913. Returning to the United States he was army physician in Fort DuShane, Utah, Fort Bayard, New Mexico, and at the Presidio, San Francisco, until October, 1912, when he returned to Casper and resumed his practice among his many old-time friends.

The Second United States Volunteer cavalry which was known as "Torrey's Rough Riders," was raised by Colonel Jay L. Torrey. This regiment was composed mostly of Wyoming men. The troopers left Cheyenne on June 22, 1898, for Camp Cuba Libre, Jacksonville, Florida. At Tupelo, Mississippi, on the 26th, the second section of the troop train ran into the first section, which resulted in the immediate death of three troopers. Three others died later, and eleven others were more or less injured. Among the injured was Colonel Torrey. The enlisted men in this regiment from Natrona county were: Hugh L. Patton, first lieutenant; Edward S. White, first sergeant; Robert McAdams, R. W. Wanlace, and George C. Thompson, sergeants; Robert J. Allen, David A. Williams, and Charles E. Nichols, corporals; Charles H. Lilly, trumpeter; Horace Evans, Gillman A. Hackett, George Lobmeier, Eugene H. O'Brien, Charles F. Padden, Lewis D. Scott, troopers. Before leaving for Camp Cuba Libre, the friends of Lieutenant Patton in Natrona county presented to him a sword bearing the following inscription: "Presented to Lieutenant Hugh L. Patton, Second Regiment Volunteer Cavalry, U. S. A., Torrey's Rough Riders, by the citizens of Natrona county, Wyoming."

John Clark was among the Natrona county "boys" who rendered excellent service to the government during the Spanish-American war, having served as packmaster with Colonel Torrey's regiment, and is entitled to as much credit as were the enlisted men.

The record of Torrey's troopers in the Florida camp shows but one "scrap," and that affair never got beyond the borders of the com-



pany street. One of the troopers described it to the officer-of-the-day in this wise, "It didn't amount to anything, sir. One of the boys in the Leadville troop got a little too much liquor. He came over to our troop looking for something, and he found it. I handed it to him."

These troopers never got into action with the Spaniards. The war ended too soon; but they proved fully the quality of western manhood. The struggle made by Colonel Torrey to get his regiment into action was energetic and persistent, but futile. The regiment arrived in Jacksonville June 28, after the fighting had begun at Santiago. An urgent appeal was made and re-made to be included in the Porto Rican expedition, but cavalry was not needed there, and disappointment followed. All the friends of the command were sought to make sure of the regiment's being included in the force destined to make the attack on Havana, and there is no doubt but that if such an attack had been made the Torrey Rough Riders would have occupied a conspicuous place.

The regiment remained at Camp Cuba Libre until October, when it mustered out. In the battalion, the battery and the Second United States Volunteer cavalry, the state of Wyoming furnished a number of men aggregating four and a half times her proper quota, as apportioned by the war department—more in proportion to population than any other state in the Union.

In his message to the legislature in January, 1899, Governor DeForest Richards said, "The Wyoming Volunteer Aid association, composed of the patriotic women of the state, has inaugurated a movement for the erection of a monument to the memory of the volunteers from this state who sacrificed their lives in maintaining the honor of their country. It is desired that permission be given for the erection of this monument within the grounds of the capitol and that a suitable contribution to the fund be made by the state." February 20, 1899, the act was passed and the requested permission given. The sum of \$1,500 was set apart as a "Heroes' Monument Fund," to be delivered to the Volunteer Aid association when so ordered by the governor. The monument was erected in 1900 and was at first located immediately east of the walk leading to the main entrance of the capitol. In 1917, it was removed to its present location at the southeast corner of the capitol grounds.

The membership of the Spanish-American war veterans of Natrona county includes the "boys" who volunteered from Natrona county and who are yet living here, as well as those who responded to their country's call from other places and are now making their home here. On May 21, 1919, Lieutenant Caspar Collins camp, No. 15, United Spanish War veterans, Department of Colorado and

Wyoming, Casper, Wyoming, formed its temporary organization, with Joseph H. Adriance, commander; G. H. Peters, junior vice commander; George W. Ferguson, chaplain; Louis Schmidt, quartermaster; Lincoln F. Kelly, color sergeant. On January 1, 1922, the roster included the following-named members: J. H. Adriance, Louis R. Schmidt, George C. Thompson, D. M. Lobdell, Wm. M. Green, Thos. H. Downs, Lincoln F. Kelly, John Bryne, John T. Scott, Lewis D. Scott, W. W. Sproul, George W. Ferguson, Wm. J. Evans, Edward J. Kemp, John H. Carey, Otto Schenkel, J. J. Giblin, F. J. Wolfe, Ambrose Hemingway, Elzear A. Pelletier, Chas. H. Lilly, George T. Handbury, J. H. Pinney, Ernest M. Kerr, Thos. Mullin, John H. Creamer, Wm. Armstrong, F. C. Powell, J. C. Kamp, Henry Peterson, Roy Williamson, Jonathan E. Frisby, Virgil O. Nesbitt, John L. Peete, E. N. Cole, Paul McNamara, Chas. C. Campbell, Edgar R. Rouse, George W. Bouseman, John M. Tobin, Lloyd E. Mills, Pat. J. McDonnell, Wade F. Fowler, T. J. Bassett, George W. Bentley, Cyrus M. Morris, Paul Spehr, C. A. Limieux, Harry F. Schifferno, F. B. Sowers, W. R. Covars, S. N. Garvey, Bennie H. Adcock, John J. Durst, Thomas F. Riley, Hugh L. Patton, Samuel Shove.

On each Memorial day the members of Caspar Collins Camp decorate with flowers the graves of the soldiers who are interred in Highland cemetery, and they march out to the burial ground in a body where taps are sounded and a salute is fired over the graves of the departed veterans, a list of whom is herewith given: S. Sanchez, C. L. Rounds, James Fitzgerald, Don Miller, Jack Lehee, J. Anderson, Dr. J. F. Leeper, W. Sanders, W. F. Smith, J. H. Chapman, W. Tobin, N. B. Carlisle, Charles Ricker, Erick Anderson, Harry Lyttle, Ed. S. White, H. A. Lilly, Charles L. Dutton, J. R. Miller, Wm. Kropp, W. Santell, W. W. Bahmer, R. T. Kemp. The above were Spanish-American War veterans and the following is a list of the departed Civil War veterans: Henry Shank, Luke Wentworth, Isaac Collins, Matt Campfield, John Karion, Dr. Joe Benson, Wm. J. Emery, James Dickie, Martin Oliver, Peter Heagney, James Dougherty, Joseph Donnelly, Sam Desbron, Charles K. Bucknum, John K. Wood, Hiram Lewis, Nathan Savage, Gillespie, Chauncey Ishbull.

#### NATRONA COUNTY BOYS IN THE WORLD WAR

No county in the state of Wyoming and but few counties in any of the states in the Union, population and wealth considered, responded more liberally than Natrona county with men and money

to our country's call in the great world war. The inspiring and patriotic words of our congressman, Frank Wheeler Mondell, on the floor of the house, in the discussion as to the advisability of the United States declaring war against the Imperial German government are herewith reprinted, which are worthy of going into history:

"For two years and more the spectre of the European war has spread its pall of terror over the earth — to us a nightmare of frightfulness, to the nations engaged, a reality of unspeakable horror. As the titanic conflict on and under and over land and sea has extended its area of destruction, we have fervently hoped and devoutly prayed that we might escape its devouring flame. Our patience and forbearance, as our rights have been ignored and denied, as our honor and power have been mocked, our citizens subjected to humiliation, to fearful suffering and to awful death, have been the outward and visible signs of our profound and sincere longing for honorable peace. But there is no peace! Arrogance and despotic power has decreed suffering and death to all who venture the sea lanes where all have the right under the laws of God and man to pass unharmed. Our flag has been fired upon, our power contemptuously ignored, our citizens wickedly slain. Amid conditions such as these, continued patience and forbearance cease to be a virtue; they come to be accepted as signs of cowardice and weakness, the evidence of supine submission to insult and outrage; they no longer express the attitude of a brave and free people. And so, regretfully, but with firm determination, the Republic draws the sword, firm in the conviction that we fight the battle of human rights against the excesses of despotic power."

And then on April 2, 1917, at 8 o'clock in the evening, President Woodrow Wilson called the congress in extraordinary assembly and delivered his "war" message, advocating co-operation and counsel in action with the Allied governments then at war with Germany and the extension of liberal credits to them, and it was realized that we were in fact at the very entrance of war. The president's message was as follows:

"I advise that this congress declare the course of the Imperial German government to be in fact a belligerent of the United States, and that it formally accepts this status of the belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it and employ all of its resources to bring the government to terms and to end the war.

"Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning, and without the thought of help or mercy for those on board; even hospital ships, ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium. Though the latter were provided with safe conduct through the prescribed areas by the German government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, they have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or principle."

This message, while the American flag was being waved from the mezzanine in the Henning hotel, was read to several thousand people by ex-Governor B. B. Brooks, only a few minutes after it was delivered before congress by the president. When the governor finished reading, all was quiet for a second and then someone started to sing "America," and the thousand men and women sang the national anthem with more meaning and more enthusiasm than they ever sung it before.

After the president's message had been read to congress Chairman Flood of the house committee on military affairs introduced a resolution as follows:

"Whereas, The recent course of the Imperial German government is in fact nothing less than a war against the government and the people of the United States, Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the senate and the house of representatives of the United States of America, in congress assembled, that a state of belligerency which thus has been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared, and that the president be authorized to immediately take steps not only to put this country in a state of defense, but to exert all power and employ all the resources of this country to carry on war and bring the conflict to a successful conclusion."

This resolution was passed by the house of congress at 3:08 in the morning of April 6, 1917, by a vote of 373 to 50, after a debate lasting seventeen hours, during which twenty-five members spoke. And thus, on Good Friday, the day on which Christ died for humanity, America went to war against the Imperial German government for humanity.

Then came the preparation for war. Recruiting stations were established in every town of any size in the United States; Red Cross organizations were perfected, food conservation was commenced and the people laid aside money for the purchase of Liberty bonds. Many young men volunteered for service at once and others declared they were ready, willing and anxious to go when their country should call them, and on the fifth of June, when the first register for military draft was finished, there were 1,276 names from Natrona county on the roll, while 960 were reported as absent, making a total of 2,236 available men to enter the war from this county, in addition to the 196 who had entered the service as volunteers. Natrona county was called upon July 20 to draw fifty-seven names for the first selective draft, and on August 7, 8 and 9, 102 draft men were ordered to report to the board.

By this time the people of the whole nation had their meatless days and their wheatless days; they wore their old clothes; they denied themselves the luxuries and pleasures they had been accustomed to having and saved their money to buy Liberty bonds. Women were knitting socks and sweaters and making dressings and bandages for our boys who had gone. Although the older men could not go to the front, like the younger men, they were nevertheless fully as patriotic, and gave up their time, their money and their pleasures, and made many sacrifices in order that this war might be brought to a "successful conclusion."

From Casper there were 1,300 registered; from Badwater, 3; Greenlaw, 1; Bessemer, 13; Powder River, 40; Salt Creek, 88;

Bucknum, 15; Arminto, 60; Efell, 10; Big Muddy, 14; Freeland, 16; Waltman, 9; Miller, 4; Lone Bear, 14; Alcova, 17; Oil City, 7; Ertay, 7. At the recruiting station in Casper on July 20 there were 150 names on the roster of Company L, Wyoming National Guard. These men were encamped at the fair grounds south of town from July 20 until August 2, when they left for the Cheyenne temporary training camp, and a fund of \$1,000 was raised by the citizens of Casper as a "mess fund" for the boys.

The first Natrona county draft delegation to leave for training quarters was on September 5, 1917. Two men were called. They went to American Lake, Camp Lewis. The second increment, consisting of nineteen men, left on September 23, and the third, consisting of twenty men, left on October 7. For the fourth increment thirteen men were called on November 2. During this time more than 200 men had voluntarily enlisted and gone to their training camps.

The first death to occur on foreign soil among the soldiers of Natrona county was on January 17, 1918, at 8:55 in the evening, when George L. Vroman, a private in an ammunition train, died of pneumonia. He contracted a severe cold during a railroad trip from the port at which he landed in France to the first landing station. He was 31 years of age.

By the first of March, 1918, 422 men from Natrona county had enlisted as soldiers and more than 200 had enrolled in the public service reserve.

The Standard and Midwest refineries had many extra guards at their plants, guards were stationed at the Pathfinder dam, railroad bridges were guarded and every precaution was taken against German spies, there being every reason to believe that quite a number were located in and around Casper.

Seventeen draft men left on April 27 for Camp Lewis, and on May 10 six men left for Camp Lewis and five for Fort McDowell, California, and a call was received on May 13 for 100 men from Natrona county to entrain for Fort Benjamin Harrison on May 20 and twenty to be sent to Fort Logan, Colorado, on May 29. Thirteen more left for Camp Logan, Utah, June 13, and a call was made for seventy-five men to go to Camp Lewis June 28. There were sixty-nine men volunteered for the service during the month of June.

By this time not enough men were left on the range in this county to properly look after the stock; clerks were short in the stores and offices, there was a shortage of skilled mechanics at the refineries and there was a shortage of men everywhere in the county, but the calls kept coming for more men, and on July 6 fifty-four men



left for Fort Logan; twenty more left for the same place on the 19th, and on the 23rd 100 men were called to Fort Riley, Kansas. Seven selectives left for Camp Fremont, California, August 6, and seven more left for the same place the following day. Nineteen were called for Fort Riley on August 12, and twelve for Camp Lewis September 4, and on September 6, eight members of the Home Guard left for Camp Lewis. During the month of August three doctors, one lawyer and one minister enlisted. Word was received in August that Guy Burson had been killed in action on July 5. He was the first Natrona county soldier who had been killed in battle.

Fifty-nine men left for Camp Lewis October 10, and eleven men left for Fort McArthur, San Pedro, California, October 23. By this time it was estimated that more than 2,000 men from Natrona county were in the service.

On the morning of November 7, 1918, telegraphic news was received in Casper, as it was in every town of any consequence in the whole of the United States, that the kaiser had abdicated, and Germany had indicated her surrender by the signing of an armistice, and that hostilities had ceased. Upon the receipt of these glad tidings every whistle in the city screeched, the bells in the churches rang forth the wonderful news, and men, women and even the little children knew the cause of all the noise and commotion without asking. Great crowds of people of all classes, sex, color, and age formed in the main thoroughfares of the city and cheered; an impromptu parade was formed, and the huge crowd marched to the court house; flags were unfurled, the band played, patriotic songs were sung and prayer was offered, and everybody went home with a light heart, but the next day word came over the wire that the news was not official; that the kaiser had not abdicated, that Germany had not indicated her surrender by asking for an armistice, and that hostilities had not ceased. The war spirit again permeated the air, and the people were ready and anxious to sacrifice not only their last dollar, but their last drop of blood to bring the foe to submission. Men far beyond the age limit were anxious to leave their homes and families and take up arms against the relentless foe, but on the morning of November 9 an official announcement was received that the kaiser had abdicated, and that the Imperial German government was ready to surrender, and at 2:40 on the morning of November 11, 1918, official news was received of the submission of Germany. It was announced that the armistice was signed at 5 o'clock in the morning, Paris time, which is some ten hours earlier than western time in the United States, and that hostilities had entirely ceased at 11 o'clock A.M. all along the lines.

Again the whistles shrieked forth and the bells in the city rang long and loud. But few people remained in bed, although the hour was early, and they determined to make this a big day as well as a long one. Arrangements were quickly made to fittingly celebrate the occasion, and all the business houses, offices and factories in the city were closed in the afternoon and a monster parade was formed; thousands of people were in line, the bands played, and the day was celebrated as only Americans can celebrate after such a grand victory.

Then the casualty lists commenced to come in. This was the sad, sad part of the war. As Natrona county's percentage of men in the war was large, the casualty list must necessarily be large. Twenty-six men from this little county sacrificed their lives, a list of whom is herewith appended: Asimakopoulos, Demetrios; Bean, Frank L.; Buhr, John L.; Burson, Guy C.; Butler, James; Cheadle, Albert K.; Cheney, William D.; Cummings, Cecil Fleming; Cutler, Frank D.; Devault, Charlie O.; Evans, Richard T.; Graves, Loren; Green, Archie B.; Humann, Herman; Lowery, Bond M.; Marston, William D.; Mobius, Frank; McClafin, Arbie W.; Neil, Harry W.; Romero, Frank Bernal; Sanford, Albert B.; Scannell, Francis E.; Snyder, Orin I.; Speckbacker, John M.; Starks, Hugh L.; Stanley, Dewey M.; Vroman, George W.

In January, 1919, Adjutant General W. K. Weaver made a comprehensive report of the part that Wyoming took in the world war, and among other things he said: "It is worthy of note and pride that in this war, as in the Spanish-American war, Wyoming furnished more soldiers in proportion to population than any other state. Wyoming furnished 923 men for the draft in 1917 and over 7,000 for the 1918 draft. All told the state sent more than 12,000 men to the army, and approximately one-half of these men were sent over seas."

About seven per cent of Wyoming's population served the nation on battlefields and in camps, while the average for the United States was about four per cent, and it will be noted with pride that Natrona county's percentage was far in advance of even the state's percentage. In 1920 the federal census showed that Natrona county had a population of 14,635, and allowing 1,365 that the census enumerators might have, and no doubt did overlook, that would have given us a population of 16,000. In 1917-18 the population surely was not more than it was in 1920, and in that case, with 2,000 men in the service, which was twelve and one-half per cent of our population, a percentage that very few counties in the whole nation equaled.



It was not long after the signing of the armistice until the soldiers commenced to return home from the numerous camps, and in order to give them a hearty welcome, a Mother's league was formed. On February 20, 1919, this league secured rooms on the ground floor of the Oil Exchange building, and on the 26th the rooms were thrown open to the soldiers and sailors who had returned. The rooms were furnished with tables and chairs, and there was an abundance of books and magazines and cards and games of different kinds, and it was surely a boon for many a young man who returned from camp and had no home, no position, and but little money to make a new start in life. The club was under the management of the Mother's league until June 12, when it was turned over to the Army and Navy club. On April 23, 1919, a temporary organization of the Natrona county chapter of the American Legion was perfected, with Edgar S. Moore as president; Edgar S. Bean, vice president; Kestler Long, secretary; R. H. Nichols, treasurer; and E. Hussey, C. P. Plummer and W. H. Fuller, committee on constitution and by-laws. On July 18, 1919, the Casper chapter asked for a charter membership in the American Legion, and it was granted August 26, and was given the name of George L. Vroman Post No. 2, in honor of the first Natrona county soldier who died over seas. There were thirty-five charter members, and Chiles P. Plummer was elected chairman, and C. R. Peterson secretary. R. H. Nichols was elected to represent the local post in the state legion. The Army and Navy club was then merged into the Legion, which has resulted in a strong and beneficial organization with a large and influential membership.

The Denny O. Wyatt Post, No. 57, in honor of one of Natrona county's brave young soldiers, who served over seas, returned home and died from the effects of injuries received while he was in the service, received its national and state charter on the 12th day of March, 1922, with forty charter members. Excellent club rooms were secured where social entertainments and business sessions were held on regular occasions. The initial election of officers for this post was held on the evening of April 17, 1922, when T. J. McKeon was named as post commander; L. F. Thorne, vice commander; H. M. McDermott, finance officer; Fred Dralle, adjutant. It was reported at this meeting that the post had a membership numbering eighty.

A massive bronze tablet was unveiled at the capitol building in Cheyenne on November 11, 1921, the anniversary of Armistice day, upon which was this inscription: "Dedicated to the Memory of Those Men from Wyoming Who Made the Supreme Sacrifice." Beneath the inscription appear the names of approximately 350

Wyoming soldiers who are known to have died in the military service during the great World war. This memorial tablet is seven by four feet in dimensions, and is supported on either side by a female figure holding in her hand a palm branch. The legislature of 1921 appropriated \$2,000 for the purchase of this tablet, which has been placed at the right-hand side of the capitol rotunda, near the main entrance, which is a fitting memorial to the young men who sacrificed their lives for their country.

Powder River Post, No. 291, Veterans of Foreign Wars, was organized in Casper in October, 1922, and the charter remained open until November 16, when the post was instituted and officers installed as follows: Commander, E. R. Purkiser; senior vice commander, E. A. Carrier; junior vice commander, Orin Theige; adjutant, Thuron R. Hughes; quartermaster, D. D. Murphy; chaplain, C. H. C. Scullion; trustees, Charles J. McNulty, Harold A. Park, W. H. Blott; membership committee, E. A. Carrier, Charles H. C. Scullion, Noble Welch; post historian, M. T. Rice; patriotic instructor, N. E. Robinson.

### NATRONA COUNTY'S THREE EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes in Wyoming have been of comparatively rare occurrence, so far as any extensive destruction of life and property has been involved. The first convulsive force felt in the central part of the state that could be termed an earthquake occurred at 3:15 on the morning of June 25, 1894. There were two distinct and violent shocks and nearly everybody in Casper was awakened by the vibrations and a general feeling of alarm prevailed. No great damage was done to any of the buildings and the convulsions were of short duration. On Casper mountain the disturbance was much more pronounced than in the valley. There the vibrations continued for fifteen seconds. Dishes were dashed to the floor from the cupboards and a number of people were thrown from their beds by the undulations. There was doubt, consternation and terror among the people, some of whom expressed the fear that the earth would open up and swallow them. Their fears were unfounded, of course, but when daylight came they made haste to come to Casper and remained here several days.

The water in the Platte river, which the day before had been fairly clear, changed to a reddish hue and became thick with mud thrown up from the bottom and caved in from the banks. Those who were near the river in the vicinity of Alcova said they could hear the rushing sounds and violent splashes into the stream, and in the morn-

ing they saw where large portions of the earth had been torn away and lapsed into the river.

Again on November 14, 1897, at 6:30 in the morning, this part of Wyoming was visited by another but more violent earthquake shock. Those who were awake at the time reported that for several minutes before the shock occurred they heard a rumbling noise from the southwest resembling that of a dozen trains of cars. Then came the rocking of the earth, which lasted for at least two seconds. George M. Rhoades, who was sitting on a chair lacing his shoes, was thrown to the floor. As soon as he could gain his equilibrium, he rushed out of doors, fearing that the roof of his house would fall in on him. Others hastened from their beds. The guests in the Grand Central hotel made a hasty exit, some of them not tarrying to dress. Men on the range who were sleeping on the ground said they could hear the rumbling sound several minutes before they felt the shock. The noise kept getting closer and closer until it became almost deafening and then occurred the sickening, shivering, rocking of the earth which caused consternation among the sheep and horses. The Grand Central hotel building was considerably damaged by the convulsion, the northeast corner of the building being rent with a crack from two to four inches wide, extending from the third to the first story. The ceiling in the lobby was cracked from the east to the west end and the structure was otherwise damaged to such extent that many bolts and braces were required to put it in a safe condition. This was the only building in Casper that was damaged to any great extent, as this and the Odd Fellows' building, were the only large brick buildings in the town at that time.

And again, on October 25, 1922, at 6:20 in the evening a slight shock of about one-half second duration was felt by some people in Casper. Some of those who were sick and in bed felt the shock more distinctly than those who were up and around in their homes or in their business houses or upon the streets. The tremor was very slight, and no damage of any kind was reported. At Salt Creek, fifty miles north, and at Bucknum, twenty-two miles west of Casper, the vibrations were much more pronounced, and they were from two to three seconds' duration. Some people in the vicinity of Bucknum reported that the disturbance continued for at least ten seconds, but it is evident that they judged the duration more by the length of time it seemed to them than the actual continuation of the undulations. Glass in the windows at the Box C ranch house, a few miles to the north of Bucknum station, were cracked and the frame buildings swayed and creaked as though they were about to be caved in. In Salt Creek dishes which had been placed on the dining tables and

those that were in the china closets were badly shaken, and pictures that were hanging on the walls in some of the residences swayed to and fro, and many other indications of the seismic disturbance were in evidence. Many people rushed from their houses, thinking that a gas explosion had occurred in the vicinity, and it was some time before it dawned upon them that the shock they had felt had been caused by an earthquake.

### NITRO-GLYCERINE EXPLOSION

The explosion of 400 quarts of nitro-glycerine at about 8 o'clock in the evening on May 26, 1919, at the storage house of the Wyoming Torpedo company, about two miles east from Casper, shook the town as if there was an earthquake. Windows in many of the business houses were broken and the vibrations could be distinctly felt throughout the town. The storage house for the glycerine was a dug-out along the river bank and Mack McCoy and a companion had brought an auto truck load of the nitro-glycerine from the plant a couple of miles farther east, intending to put it in the storage house over night and take it to Thermopolis the next day to be used in the oil fields near that town. It is supposed that the explosion was caused from the concussion of opening the storage house door or that one of the cans was dropped on the ground while the men were unloading it from the truck. Immediately after the report was heard in Casper a huge cloud of smoke and dust was seen to rise in the sky and its appearance resembled an immense balloon in the air. Fully three thousand people rushed to the scene of the accident. Where the storage house stood was now an immense hole in the ground, hundreds of bits of human flesh and bones were scattered within a radius of a quarter of a mile, the auto truck was blown into thousands of pieces and scattered about in all directions; the trees along the river bank were sheared of their branches and the destruction was complete. McCoy and his companion were seen driving the auto truck toward the storage house about ten minutes before the explosion occurred, but the identity of the other man was never established.

### THE PATHFINDER DAM

The Pathfinder dam was built under false pretenses and Wyoming was thereby deprived of reclaiming a vast amount of acreage which would have been irrigated had the plans been carried out as the people of Wyoming were led to believe and given to understand they would.

General Manager Bidwell and Superintendent Hughes of the Chicago & Northwestern railway, who undoubtedly were secretly working under instructions from the Nebraska delegation in congress, came to Casper in their private car on June 14, 1904, and requested an audience with the representative business men of Casper. About twenty Casper business men were admitted inside Mr. Bidwell's private car, and Mr. Bidwell was the main and about the only speaker. He produced some maps, especially prepared to exhibit to the people of Wyoming which showed the lands proposed to be irrigated by the department under this project amounting to 1,380,000 acres in Wyoming, 207,000 of which were in Natrona county. Bidwell said there were to be three reservoirs, one eight miles above Alcova, the site of the now Pathfinder dam, one fifteen miles above Casper and another eight miles up the river.

When this information was presented to our people they readily approved the project, and then Messrs. Bidwell and Hughes went to Douglas, where the same procedure was taken to fool the people of that town and, as at Casper, the people there gave their hearty approval to the project. The result was that the appropriation of a million dollars was made by congress for the project, but only one dam and one reservoir was constructed, and Nebraska has thus far gotten the use of the greater portion of the water that was promised and rightfully belonged to Wyoming, and instead of 207,000 acres of land being reclaimed in Natrona county, about 25,000 acres were inundated and none reclaimed.

The scheme was thoroughly studied and investigated by the reclamation service for two years prior to the commencement of the dam's construction. The system was named "Pathfinder" in honor of General John C. Fremont, the great explorer, who made the Platte valley, in what is now Wyoming, the scene of his most interesting travels and investigations, and it was at about where the dam is located that Fremont's boats were capsized. The Astorians gave this canyon the name of the "Fiery Narrows."

This wonderful piece of masonry is built on a natural site in a solid granite formation, in the bed rock, and the walls on each side are also of this rock. The geology and topography of the location is remarkable. Here is a tremendous uplift of granite, rent in twain by the titanic forces of nature in the primeval days, creating a mighty chasm in depth and yet so narrow as to make hardly a streak in the landscape. In many places a rider approaching from either side would not see the canyon or know of the existence of the river until he was within a few rods of the perilous chasm with its almost perpendicular walls.



Actual construction work was commenced on the Pathfinder project on the 5th day of February, 1905, by Kilpatrick Bros. & Collins, who secured the contract to construct the diversion tunnel on the north side of the river, which runs a distance of 480 feet through a solid mass of granite and is thirteen feet high and ten feet wide. It is connected with the surface by two shafts, each one hundred and eighty feet deep. The emergency gates were installed in the upper shaft with a stone and cement building over them. These shafts, like the tunnel itself, are through solid granite, and every foot of their depth from the top of the precipice to the level of the river had to be drilled and blasted, and their construction in a proper manner was one of the most difficult tasks on the project. The finished shaft in which the gates are installed is surrounded by an iron railing with a ladder running from the top to the bottom.

Construction work on the dam proper was commenced in September, 1905, by the Geddis-Seerie Stone company of Denver who was awarded the contract by the government. Before the masonry work could be commenced the water in the channel of the river was turned into the diversion tunnel by a dam made from many thousand sacks of sand and the dam site at the bottom of the river was left bare and free from water. This site for the full width of the canyon and the width of the dam was cleaned of all gravel, sand, earth, fissured and disintegrated rock to a depth of fifteen feet and a clean foundation upon bed rock was prepared for the commencement of the building of the big dam.

The base of the dam is ninety-five feet wide and eighty feet across the chasm, and at the top of the dam, 218 feet above the base, it is twelve feet wide and 432 feet across the chasm. In the early spring, after the melting of the snow in the water sheds above, there is impounded by this huge structure more than 1,000,000 acre feet of water, and this would reclaim 350,000 acres of the arid land of Wyoming that at the present time can be used only for grazing, but as mentioned above, Wyoming gets very little benefit from it, for the water is carried into western Nebraska where a great many thousand acres have been reclaimed and are growing wonderful crops of grain and grass.

The contractors completed their work on this dam June 1, 1909, but since that time a large dyke has been built south of the structure. The land at the point where the dyke was built was about twenty feet lower than the top of the masonry work of the dam and should the water have risen so high that it would have run over this low ground, it would have washed the soft formation down the channel and thus change the course of the river, leaving the dam high and



FREIGHT TEAM AND WAGONS WITH SUPPLIES FROM CASPER TO PALMER, DAY





dry in the canyon. It was thought by the reclamation engineers that the reservoir would not be filled for several years after the dam was completed and that there was no immediate danger of the water's rising to the top of this low piece of ground. But on account of the heavy snows during the winter of 1910 and the heavy spring rains that followed, the water rose almost to the top of this low stretch of ground and only by the most heroic effort was the huge body of water kept from cutting through the soft formation. Men and teams worked night and day for several weeks, piling brush, wood, and sacks of sand and dirt in the low place. The flood gates were turned wide open and arrangements were made to blow out a section of the dam with dynamite if the water could not otherwise be prevented from running over this low land. For three or four days it was a hard struggle between the men and teams and the gradual rise of the water, and at one time it was thought there was no hope except to blow out a section of the masonry in the dam. Just at this time, however, seemingly an act of Providence, the water commenced to recede and then all danger was passed. The permanent dyke, which is about 1,420 feet in length, was then built by first digging down to the conglomerate and then putting in a cement core three feet on the bottom and tapering to about one foot on top. This cement core is about thirty-five feet high and the top of the dyke extends eighteen feet above the level of the spillway on the north side of the dam. In the building of this dyke, dirt and gravel was hauled in and packed with a steam roller; the face of the structure is rip-rapped with stone eighteen inches in depth and there is now no possibility of the high waters doing any damage. When the water rises to a sufficient height, it runs over the spillway and is carried into the channel of the river below. A concrete wing 108 feet long and twelve feet wide at the base and four feet wide at the top, with an average height of ten feet, has been constructed for the purpose of keeping the water in this spillway.

In the construction of the dam 340 carloads of cement were used, a total of 19,000,000 pounds. If this cement had been loaded on one train it would have been more than three miles in length or would have made seventeen trains of ordinary length. All this cement, together with the enormous amount of machinery and supplies, was hauled from Casper by freight teams to the Pathfinder over rough roads, through low valleys and over high hills and in all kinds of weather. The quickest trip ever made from Casper to Pathfinder with a freight outfit was three days, and the longest time required was seventy-six days. These freight teams consisted of from two to four loaded wagons chained together and a covered wagon in which

the freighter and his family often lived, the whole being drawn by from twelve to twenty-two horses, which were called string teams and were handled by a single, or jerk line.

The three-mile train load of cement, together with the steel, gravel, crushed rock, concrete and granite in the dam would make a train load of material that would be over forty miles in length. It is difficult to imagine the size of a building that could be constructed with this immense amount of material. The granite used in the dam was quarried less than a quarter of a mile from the structure, and large pieces forty feet square were first blown out and then split into smaller squares, averaging in weight eight to ten tons; these after being dressed and drenched were conveyed to the works on a tram and lowered to the dam where they were laid in a heavy bed of mortar with the side joints not more than six inches in thickness, and the concrete rammed into place, the largest proportion of stone and the smallest proportion of mortar and concrete being used.

At the base of the dam are two tunnels, each three feet in diameter, and one culvert four by six feet, and through these tunnels and the culvert streams of water went rushing, roaring down the canyon with the force of Niagara. A practically unlimited amount of power could be generated from these three streams that would supply all the needs of ten cities the size of Denver, but up to the present time nothing has been done toward putting this power into service.

In the spring of 1911 these tunnels and the culvert were bulk-headed and the flow of water sufficient to keep the river up to the level that will supply the needs of the city of Casper and the refineries here, as well as the other towns and the ranchmen along the stream east from Casper, is supplied from a four-inch pipe extending through the tunnel at the base of the dam, in addition to a stream running through the tunnel on the south side of the dam. In recent years the reservoir has been filled to overflowing in the spring of the year and there has been a heavy flow over the spillway on the north side of the dam. When the water runs over the spillway it is within twelve feet of the top of the dam, giving a depth of 184 feet of water at the face of the dam. Then the North Platte is backed up for twenty miles and the Sweetwater river for fifteen miles, and the width of the reservoir at the widest point at that time is about four miles. About a half dozen ranches containing an area of fully 25,000 acres, which includes the grazing land, have been covered by this immense reservoir, and the government paid the settlers who were deprived of their land in the neighborhood of \$170,000.

Since the contract for the building of the dam was completed, on June 1, 1909, a great many improvements have been made, in addi-

tion to the building of the dyke on the south side. Among these improvements is a tunnel on the south side which was installed in 1910-11. It is sixteen feet deep and sixteen feet wide, sixty feet above the bed of the river. This tunnel was built for the purpose of allowing a greater flow of water through during the spring and summer months when it is used for irrigating purposes and to relieve the pressure on the gates of the north tunnel. In connection with this tunnel an air shaft was built similar to the air shaft into the north tunnel. Another tunnel has been built on the north side of the river above the original tunnel. All these tunnels have been equipped with gates and balance valves which are automatically controlled by the reservoir pressure. A set of two auxiliary gates and two hydraulic-operated balance valves were installed on the north lower tunnel in 1920-21-22 and upon completion of this work the portal of the tunnel was bulkheaded just below the air shaft. At this place a by-pass valve was installed. An average of about twenty men were working at the dam since the original contract was completed in 1909 until the summer of 1922. The government maintains an exclusive telephone line from Casper to Pathfinder which is used only in connection with business pertaining to the reclamation service.

H. D. Comstock was the resident engineer during the construction of the dyke in 1910 and until May 30, 1913. S. S. Sleeth was superintendent of the reservoir from 1910 to September, 1911. J. C. Austin was superintendent from May, 1913, to August, 1918, and he was succeeded by S. S. Sleeth who served until December, 1918. Then came H. E. Brown who served until July, 1921, and he was succeeded by T. S. Martin as superintendent of construction.

In the spring time when the reservoir is filled to overflowing and the water rushes over the spillway in great volumes, having the appearance of Niagara Falls, there is always some one ready to spread the report that the dam is unsafe and many timid people in Casper do not rest easy until the water commences to recede late in the summer. In regard to the safety of this dam, Director F. H. Newell says: "There is probably no structure in the United States better designed and finished and more deserving of higher commendation for its stability and absolute safety. The absurd stories sent out concerning it cannot fail to do harm in alarming timid people, who have absolutely no occasion for concern."

Since the original appropriation of one million dollars for the construction of this dam, up to June 30, 1920, additional appropriations of \$10,279,939 have been made for the project, a portion of which was expended on the Guerensey dam and the irrigation ditches in that vicinity, but the greater portion was expended on the ditches

in western Nebraska where the main body of the water is carried and where immense crops are raised each year upon the vast amount of land that is irrigated. Several millions of dollars have also been expended on the dam, for the improvements and repairs before mentioned.

Through the efforts of the citizens of Natrona county a survey was made in 1920 under the direction of the state engineer of Wyoming for the purpose of ascertaining the number of acres that could be irrigated in Natrona county if a gravity overfall diversion dam 130 feet high were built in the Alcova canyon, so the water could be stored and raised to a level of a proposed canal that would distribute the water over a stretch of land about forty miles in length and then be returned to the river through natural drainage along the forty-mile stretch of territory included in the irrigation district, and it was found that more than 100,000 acres, all in Natrona county, could be reclaimed. From 15,000 to 17,000 acres of this land is in the Bates Hole country, but most of it lies in the valley in which the Burlington and Northwestern railway tracks pass through. A resurvey was jointly made by the state and the United States reclamation service in 1921-22, and the investigations and report made by the state engineer was found correct. This encouraged the people of the county to ask for an appropriation by the government of a sufficient amount to build this project, which it was said would be built when the original proposition came up many years before.

This project has advantages supported by few such projects at their inception. Figuring the area to be irrigated at 100,000 acres it is estimated that the acreage can be devoted to production by putting 50,000 acres in alfalfa, 11,000 in sugar beets, 15,000 in small grains, 5,000 in potatoes, 4,000 in corn, 10,000 in pasturage and 5,000 in home grounds, stock corrals, green vegetables and garden truck, etc.

Converting to agricultural purposes the idle land now surrounding Casper is designed not only to produce food products to supply the demands of a growing city, but also to make possible several new industries and to bring about a higher development of the livestock industry, which for years has been one of the foundation stones of the prosperity of Natrona county. The development of agriculture and the building up of a market for agricultural products over a period of years will add an element of permanence to the community and a stability to investment by assuring the establishment of a basic industry which will continue indefinitely into the future.

When this is done the state of Wyoming and Natrona county, especially, will have come into its own. Natrona county has been

brought to the fore through the persistent efforts of its people as much as it has by its natural resources. It has always been the custom of the people of this county to give their time and their money to encourage and foster any laudable enterprise, and although a great deal of time and money have been expended which did not bring the desired results, nevertheless the word "discourage" was not in their vocabulary, and one failure seemed to be a stimulant for them to go after the next enterprise with a more determined effort, and although the Pathfinder dam was constructed in 1909, during the past thirteen years the people have constantly endeavored to convince the United States reclamation service and the congressmen that thousands upon thousands of acre feet of water from the Pathfinder reservoir are going to waste during the summer months and that this vast amount of water would reclaim thousands of acres of land in Natrona county, and as a result of this persistency, on August first in 1922, Chief Engineer F. E. Weymouth of the United States reclamation service, Frank C. Emerson, state engineer, A. Weiss, project manager, and A. T. Strahorn, soil expert, together with a committee of Casper citizens, left Casper and spent several days going over the survey that had been made, for the purpose of determining whether the proposition would be feasible, and even after all these years the people look upon this visit of these men as a sign of encouragement that it will not be many more years until the water from this project will be spread over the land in the eastern part of Natrona county, and instead of the land yielding cactus, grease wood, and sage brush, there will be raised thousands of tons of alfalfa, corn, potatoes, oats, rye, wheat and sugar beets, and this will be one of the richest agricultural sections of the west.

### THE NORTH PLATTE RIVER

Natrona county's largest and most important stream is the North Platte river. It enters the county at its southern boundary about midway from the eastern and western border lines and flows in a northeasterly direction for more than forty miles to the city of Casper, when it makes an abrupt turn and flows in an almost due easterly direction for about fifteen miles, when it leaves the county and enters Converse county, about thirty miles from the southern border line of Natrona county.

The Platte is one of the most extraordinary of rivers. Its fall is rapid, and its bed being composed of fine sand, one would expect that the rapid current would erode a deep channel through it. No such result, however. The broad bed of the river stands almost on a level



with the surrounding country, while the water flows back and forth in such sinuous and irregular courses as to increase in a marked degree the length of the channel. The sand washed up in one place is dropped in another, and the bed is built up as fast as it is cut down. Thus it results that so unresisting a material as fine sand withstands the action of the current better than a harder material, for it is certain that if this river with its heavy fall were flowing over solid rock it would have carved out a deep and canyon-like bed.<sup>1</sup> To see the Platte in all its glory one must see it during the spring floods. Then it spreads over its entire bed, upwards, in some places, of a mile wide, and rivals the Mississippi itself in pretentiousness of appearance. Washington Irving described the Platte as "the most magnificent and the most useless of rivers." But despite its uselessness as a stream the Platte has won a permanent place in the history of the west. If boats could not navigate its channel, the "prairie schooner" could sail along its valley, where lay the most practicable route across the plains. It led the overland traveler by gradual and imperceptible ascents from near the level of the ocean to the very summit of the Continental Divide. Along it lay the old Oregon Trail, most famous of all the overland trails.<sup>2</sup>

In many places the soft banks of the Platte are always undergoing erosion. The shore line here recedes and there advances as the earth which falls into the stream in one place is dropped in excessive bars in another. At certain seasons this action is rapid and destructive, and hundreds of acres in a single locality are frequently washed away in the course of one season. Thus the channel of the river is ever migrating from one side of the valley to the other, destroying extensive and fertile bottoms, and building up new lands.

The origin of the name of the Platte river dates back to the earliest occupation of the valleys of this stream by the French settlers, which occurred in the year 1719.<sup>3</sup> These Frenchmen discovered that the Indians called the river the Nebraska, which word in their language signified flat, which, interpreted into French, means Platte, carrying out the idea of a broad and shallow river. Hence LaPlatte river, but up to the time Bonneville made his expedition in 1832-5 it was called by most people the Nebraska river. The early trappers made many attempts to navigate this stream, but very few of them were successful.

<sup>1</sup> Chittenden, Vol. 2, p. 770.

<sup>2</sup> However useless the river may seem to have been in its earlier history, it has been utilized to a remarkable degree in later years for irrigation, and thousands of acres of land in Nebraska and Wyoming have been reclaimed, and during the summer months almost its entire flow is drawn out upon the neighboring lands. In addition to this the stream furnishes 27,000 people in Casper with water for domestic purposes all the year 'round, and one of the largest oil refineries in the world is furnished with water from the "useless" stream.

<sup>3</sup> Coutant's History of Wyoming.



Robert Stuart, the man who built the first cabin in what is now Wyoming, the cabin being located about fourteen miles west from Casper where Poison Spider creek empties into the Platte, constructed canoes and launched them on the river in March, 1813, near the east line of Wyoming, but the water was low and sandbars and rocks in the bed of the stream were numerous, and after dragging his canoes over the obstructions for several days he abandoned this method of travel and his party pursued their journey on foot down the banks of the stream. In years to follow many trappers attempted the same experiment. Some succeeded in getting the boats down the streams by taking advantage of the high water season. Previous to 1820 Jacques Laramie successfully launched his bull boats, made from the hides of bull buffalo, laden with furs from the lower point of Grand Island, and the other trappers and traders in after years did the same thing. Edward Everett Hale, in his works on Kansas and Nebraska, published in 1854, says that traders sometimes descended the river in canoes, but the "canoes or boats constantly got aground," he says, "and it seems to be regarded, even at the season of the freshets, as a last resort in the way of transfer of goods from above. The steamboat *El Paso* is said to have ascended the river last year (1853) when the water was high, more than five hundred miles from its mouth, passing up the north fork above Fort Laramie. In token of this triumph she still 'wears the horns,' for it is a custom on the western waters for a steamboat which has distinguished herself by any decided feat like this to wear a pair of antlers until some more successful boat surpasses her in the same enterprise by which she won them. The distance achieved by the *El Paso* is probably overestimated for at most seasons of the year the river is of little use for navigation."

Edward Everett Hale no doubt was correct when he said that the "achievement of the *El Paso* was overestimated," for even now when the Pathfinder dam raises the water from six to eight feet higher than it flowed in ordinary years, it would be a difficult matter for a steamboat to ascend the river five hundred miles from its mouth.

### POWDER RIVER

Powder river's reputation for being a quiet and peaceful spot was not of the best, even in the early days when the Indians caused the soldiers much trouble. It seems as though the very air, like the old-time forty-rod whiskey, makes a man want to fight. A few years after the Indians finished killing all the white men they could, a feud broke out between the cattlemen and the rustlers. After a number of the rustlers had been killed and some of the cattlemen wounded,

it was a war between the sheepmen and the cattlemen. This sore spot was healed over in a few years and then "Powder River" again came into the lime light and was the most popular war whoop in the great world war. But as to Powder river in the early days, Robert E. Strathorn in his "Hand Book of Wyoming," published in 1879, says:

"In briefly describing some of the prominent streams and valleys of Wyoming we may be frank in commencing by declaring that we have nothing good to say of Powder River, the southern boundary of the Big Horn region. Its waters are darkly mysterious and villainously alkalied; its southern tributaries ditto; and it is far from a fitting gateway to the land of beauty and plenty. However, the valley soils are among the richest in all the lands. The stream rises in the Powder River range, flows almost due north to the Yellowstone and in its tortuous windings has a length of over 300 miles. The valley is from one to three miles wide, is well timbered with cottonwood, and shows coal formation almost everywhere. Cantonment Reno, garrisoned by United States troops, is located on Powder River, near the crossing of the Cheyenne and Big Horn road. It is a general outfitting point for Big Horn miners. The most direct and well-traveled road from Deadwood to the Big Horn region strikes the Cheyenne road near here.

"Twenty-six miles north is Crazy Woman's Fork of the Powder. Its waters are clear, flowing over a gravelly bed, and it drains a more desirable region than the parent stream. But not until Clear Fork of Powder, twenty miles north of the last named stream, is reached does the visitor feel thoroughly possessed of that enthusiasm we are endeavoring to inspire. The landscape surrounding is perfect in its loveliness, and the broad valley is very nearly our ideal of a spot for the creation of most inviting homes. The valley is four or five miles wide and seventy miles long, and besides being quite well timbered at the point of crossing possesses greater stretches of hay lands than most others in this section. A ranch and trading post, called Murphy's ranch, the first to be located in the Big Horn region, is found here at the crossing.

"Twenty miles' travel farther north over grazing lands which are not equaled south of the Platte anywhere, brings the visitor to the Forks of the Piney, the road crossing them just above their union. The ruins of old Fort Phil Kearney, near the road, stimulate disagreeable thoughts about the played-out peace policy, and lead us to think what a shame it was for a powerful government to lose its grip upon such beautiful domain, and to allow the massacre of its subjects by the hundred. These valleys are about as extensive as that of Clear Fork, are just as beautiful and fertile, and undoubtedly will soon teem with the best life our Yankee enterprise can bequeath. A few miles away lies Lake DeSmet, named after the noted missionary. It is about two miles long and nearly a mile wide, and for its shores has a circle of gracefully rounded hills. Myriads of geese, ducks and other water fowl, with evidently little appreciation of danger, float its surface, and in the shallow water of the beaches we noticed innumerable small insects, resembling fish animalculae. But the water is so wonderfully brackish and charged with alkaline salts that it is doubtful whether fish could exist in it."

## WILD HORSES

In the early days of Wyoming and up until the early '90's a great many wild horses roamed over the broad plains. Some of these horses had been tamed, branded and worked by cowboys and ranchmen, but when they were turned out on the open range for a few months they again took up with the wild bunch. Cowboys, stockmen and ranchmen often times trapped and caught these wild horses, and broke them, and as a general rule, after they were broken, they proved to be the equal of any of the horses, both in endurance and intelligence.

About the first of June, 1890, a large bunch of these wild horses were ranging in the Salt Creek country, and Joseph Slaughter, John Arnold and James and Charles Macy of Glenrock spent two weeks chasing the wild animals. The first band they encountered contained five horses and two mules, and they were all captured after a chase of sixty hours without intermission. The mules were the first to give up, and they were thrown and tied, and the horses were given the same treatment when they were caught. Another band of eleven animals were captured after being chased for seventy-five miles. The unbranded horses are called "slicks," but all of the bunch captured on this trip were branded, but they were all thoroughly wild, having roamed over the plains for a number of years without being molested. When the chase is first begun the wild bunch will run ten or twelve miles in a direct line, and then they will gradually circle back to their old range. The men would station themselves along the circuit with fresh horses, and the wild bunch was kept constantly on the run without rest, food or water, until they became exhausted and gave up. When captured they were fairly well broken before they had time to rest from the long chase.

Sometimes a bunch of wild horses were chased for a week before they were captured, especially if the country was rough, where there was feed and water and an occasional draw or ravine where they could hide for an hour and rest, and sometimes when the wild bunch would get into this kind of country, they made good their escape.

The wild horses in this country, however, like the wild west, are a thing of the past. You come across a bunch of horses occasionally on the range that appear to be wild, the same as you come across some men who would have you believe they belong to that class of men who thirty or forty years ago were rough and always ready for any emergency, but these fellows nowadays are as easily tamed as the bunch of horses on the range that have not been out of the sight of man for a week.

### THE LOST CABIN MINE

Western legends regarding lost mines and lost cabins are as numerous as tales of pirates' hidden treasure in the South seas. Their foundation is probably built more of imagination than of fact. While each of the Mountain and Pacific states has had a share of these stories of lost lodes of incalculable wealth, yet the Big Horn mountains seem to have been the locality around which most of these traditions centered.

Thomas Paige Comstock, the discoverer of the famous Comstock lode in Nevada, was outfitted by a group of mining men from that

state to come to the Big Horns and search for the famous Lost Cabin mine. This was as far back as 1870. Conviction of its existence and great richness must have been great in their minds to lead them to attempt such a toilsome journey over the main range of the Rockies in that day. Comstock had discovered and sold the famous lode near Virginia City, which still bears his name. It has produced more real wealth than any other strata of quartz in the world. The great fortunes of the Mackay and Fair families, as well as many more, were drawn from this almost inexhaustible vein of silver. The Nevada expedition to the Big Horns was a failure. Either from disappointment or other causes, Comstock committed suicide while camped near Bozeman, Montana, by shooting himself. He was buried near by, but the exact location of his grave is unknown. He unlocked millions for others but none for himself. He was only one of many who lost their lives in searching amid a cruel climate and more cruel savages for this chimera of a mine that never, perhaps, existed.

It mattered little if you dropped under the knife of the red man or under the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" in this mad race for wealth. Our credulity is too highly taxed by most of these mine stories. Even in the earliest days our trappers, hunters and miners were good pathfinders. It is difficult to believe that any pioneer who had built a cabin and stayed long enough in the locality to build sluice boxes and wash placer gold should be unable to find it, even if he had been driven from it by Indians in a hurried and disconcerting manner. Neither would a man let many years elapse before beginning the search for a lost mine of such extraordinary value. Yet many of these men are said to have waited until they were on their deathbeds, back in Iowa or Pennsylvania, and then with trembling hand sought to draw a map for their heirs of the hidden treasure. Just as they are about to write the name of the stream that is the key to it all the pen drops from the lifeless hand.

Another old man who held the secret came to Buffalo, Wyoming, with three young companions, to whom he was to show the evasive treasure. While getting into a wagon at Well's Postoffice he fell dead and his secret died with him. Another thoughtful owner of the mine had left a blue-print of the location with an old Arapahoe Indian. This Indian died suddenly and the secret of the location of the wonderful mine was buried with him. A strange and mocking fatality has seemed to pursue all those who have evidenced a desire to free their souls of this golden but harassing secret.

Not only as a fact in Casper's early history, but as a piece of humor, mellowed and hallowed by time, we reproduce the following from the *Casper Tribune* of August 17, 1893. Of that party of six

who sought the rainbow's end on that day of high hopes, we believe that M. P. Wheeler is the only one now living. The story is typical of the many that have been received with credulity since there was a mine or a bad memory:

"A prospector by the name of J. C. Carter, a native of Montana, and a total stranger in this section, came into town on Thursday evening last, and told a very straight story purporting to show that during his wanderings in the Big Horn mountains he had accidentally discovered the long lost cabin, about which so many conflicting stories have been told. He brought with him a few fragments of cement rock, which he claimed to have taken from the tunnels in the vicinity of the cabin. The prospector's story was listened to with open ears, and, as is characteristic of western enterprise, a fund of \$100 was at once subscribed by the business men of Casper, and a party of six organized to proceed at once to the coveted spot. The party, composed of H. A. Lilly, M. P. Wheeler, A. D. Campbell, W. H. Carter, and J. C. Carter, with his partner, were supplied with a complete camping outfit, stored away in a large wagon. With the exception of Mr. Lilly, they left here for the Big Horn region about 2 p.m. Saturday, full of hopes and anticipations. Mr. Lilly, who went up in the vicinity of Eadsville to bring his family to town, left on a saddle-horse in the evening, expecting to catch up with the party on Sunday.

"The stories concerning the lost cabin are numerous, and as common-place as ghost-stories, but according to that told by Carter, there appears to be something in it. His story coincides very closely with the report made by two miners at Fort Fetterman in the '60's. As the tale goes, some time before the civil war, a party of prospectors struck the Big Horn region, discovered gold, built a cabin, and began active mining operations by tunneling. They had proceeded undisturbed for some time and had obtained considerable gold in nuggets, which they stored in baking powder cans, when they were surprised one day by a party of Indians, and all but two of the miners, who had secreted themselves in the cabin, were massacred. These two, feeling that the Indian hostilities were too hot for them, deserted the camp and proceeded to Fort Fetterman, where they exhibited their gold and told their stories. They then departed for the east, and have never been heard of since.

"According to Carter, his party had started out from Montana, visited many mining camps, and in pushing on, finally reached the Big Horn mountains, where the subject of the Lost Cabin mine came up. One of the party, who had visited that section before, said he believed that if they reached a certain camping spot he could figure out the location of the lost mine. Though nearly famished, and their horses in poor condition, they pushed on another day. The mine was not located that day, the 5th of August. With the exception of two men, Carter and his partner, the party gave up hope and suggested that they return. The next morning, Sunday, the party separated, Carter and one other man only continuing the search for the lost mine. After a few hours' travel, Carter claims that in pushing through the thicket, he came upon some logs about two feet above the ground. They were rotted, but still showed evidence of being used in the construction of a cabin. The building had been put up without the aid of axe or hammer, as the trunks, branches, roots and all had been laid together. The door was constructed, not in the end or side of the cabin, but in one corner, by merely not bringing the side and end of the cabin together. There were no windows, and the roof, which had been formed of twigs and branches, had decayed and fallen in. The whole structure was completely covered by young trees, and it was by the merest accident that the men came upon it. Having satisfied themselves that they had found the cabin, they proceeded to look for the gold. Nothing can express their delight, when, nor many feet from the cabin, they found the tunnels, partly caved in and covered with a heavy growth of brush. They collected a small quantity of the rock, and proceeded without delay to Casper. On reaching town they were in bad condition—hungry, both horses and men; and without money. The rock was pounded in a mortar by Mr. Lilly, and three colors of gold were found—sufficient to arouse the curiosity of our enterprising townsmen, and hence the organization of the party."



Three days after the party left Casper they reached the "Lost Cabin," on the Big Horn mountains, near Powder river, after traveling ninety miles. In addition to the mess supplies the party took with them they had picks, shovels, drills, dynamite and other miners' supplies, and they were well prepared to bring back with them all the gold they might find, but imagine their disappointment when they discovered that this "Lost Cabin," was nothing more than an Indian blind, adjacent to a beautiful mountain park, or meadow, consisting of about one hundred acres, covered with luxuriant grass where deer, elk and other wild game fed, after they had been down to the creek for a drink. The Indians would hide in this blind, or cabin, and when the game was within sure gun shot distance they would fire upon the animals, and thus secure their winter's supply of meat without the irksome task of hunting over the mountains, and through the canyons.

The party enjoyed their trip, however, for there were many fine trout streams in the Big Horn mountains, and those who did not care to look for gold in the hills and valleys, spent their time fishing and hunting. But the party was hastily broken up one morning when one of the men came running into camp out of breath, very much excited and almost speechless, exclaiming: "A bear! a bear! big as a horse!" Some of the men in the party, who were more or less curious, started to investigate. They came across the tracks of the animal, and the investigation ended then and there, without argument. They agreed that the excited man did not exaggerate, and after returning to camp without loss of time, they packed the supplies in their wagon, caught up their horses and started for home. They were absent about ten days. They found no gold, but their experience was worth the trouble and inconvenience of the journey.

During the summer of 1897 C. T. Jones, known as "Rattlesnake Jones," also discovered the Lost Cabin mine. Mr. Jones was an interesting gentleman, who carried rattlesnakes in his pockets and still stranger things in his head. It was a favorite diversion of his to engage a stranger in conversation and then casually draw a pet rattlesnake out of his shirt, and stroke its head affectionately. In the garden of fiction blooming about the Lost Cabin, Mr. Jones planted two new flowers of subtle fragrance. One was his story of putting the bleached bones of the revered prospectors in a sack and bringing them to Casper on his horse. Who could deny that the great mine was at last found when the sack full of dead men's bones would be shaken out on the Grand Central hotel porch! Saint Mark's bones were smuggled into Venice in a bucket of lard; Wyoming has sent the bones of many a mastadon, plesiosaurus and ichthyornis to adorn the museum of the Smithsonian Institution, but these relics



shrivel into insignificance before that priceless possession which once was Casper's own "The Blessed Bones of the Busted Bonanza."

The other bud which Mr. Jones pinned upon the wreath of fiction was his confession that he had been directed to the spot by spirits. Fearful that it would be surmised that these spirits were of a bottled variety, he made haste to aver that he frequently had intercourse with spirit friends who used him as a medium for the communication of secrets which were making them unhappy and restless in the spirit land. It was a matter of common report that the Indians who had killed the owners of the famous mine, and had now exchanged their tomahawks for harps in the happy hunting grounds, were very eager to get into communication with Mr. Jones.

This is a world of progress, and we are prone to boast of our many modern conveniences. Yet looking back to the days when Casper was but a village we recall seeing Mr. Rattlesnake Jones giving an exhibition with his snakes on the floor of Kimball's drug store. A man could step into the adjoining Wyoming saloon, take a few drinks of squirrel whiskey and without waiting for the slow action of the booze, could in two staggers fall into Kimball's store and see the snakes. Modern life has given us no recompense for the loss of these conveniences.

The most reliable and authentic account of the Lost Cabin mine is found in an article written by Charles K. Bucknum of Casper and published June 24, 1897. Mr. Bucknum was in Montana and Wyoming at a very early day. He had joined in the gold rush to Bannock City and Virginia, Montana. He had trapped beaver and hunted buffalo. He had seen the old river steamboats come up the Missouri as far as Fort Benton, laden with government supplies. He had seen the squaws shake wagon loads of flour into the river that they might get the gaily printed sacks to work over into dresses for themselves and shirts for the men. Originally the red man lived on a straight meat diet. They were slow to accept the white man's declaration that bread was the staff of life. After an issuance of flour the muddy Missouri ran white for a day. What Mr. Bucknum has written is the story as he got it from the best and earliest sources. Mr. Bucknum was a store house of information on the events of early days. He did not romance nor exaggerate. Much of this article is drawn from books and newspaper articles he had preserved bearing on the subject and which he had reasons to consider worthy of credence. The reader will observe that he gives names and dates and the recital reads like history instead of the palpable fictions we have previously reproduced as examples of the many legends built about the Lost mine and its frequently discovered cabin:

"Perhaps the most famous as well as the most mysterious mine on the continent is the celebrated Lost Cabin lead. It has been discovered, rediscovered and lost half a dozen times, and at present the exact location of this rich lode is as much of a mystery as ever. This mine is one of the magnets that drew Thomas Paige Comstock (Old Pancake) north from the Nevada bonanzas; but he never found the lead and he came out to find a suicide's death and a pauper's grave awaiting him. He drove a pistol bullet through his brain near Bozeman, Montana, December 27, 1870, and his neglected grave is now there, without a sign over this famous man's last resting place and almost unknown. The Lost Cabin has grown to be something of a legend, although there can be no doubt that very rich veins are said to be scattered all through the Big Horn range, and among those mountains this much-sought mine is snugly hidden away, and will probably remain so until some lucky prospector stumbles upon it and becomes a thrice millionaire in a twinkling.

"Many descriptions of the Lost Cabin have been in print, but never yet has the true story been told, or how it got the name of Lost Cabin, nor how such a big thing as a gold mine with a log cabin attachment came to be so utterly and totally lost as never to be found again. Allen Hulburt, a California stamper, of the '49 epoch, was the man who discovered the mine, built the cabin, lost the mine, and never found it again. He was a quiet, sensible citizen of Janesville, Wisconsin, in 1849, when he caught the California gold fever, like a great many others, and so in October of the same year he left home, friends, and everything else behind him and journeyed across the plains to the Pacific El Dorado. He worked his way north to Oregon, then into what is now Washington, and in the spring of 1863 found himself in Walla Walla without a cent. In company with two other roving spirits, one Jones and one Cox, the trio bought a new prospecting outfit, including six horses, and with a month's provisions in pannier packs, set out over the Mullen trail for an exploring expedition on the eastern slope of the Rockies. After hard trials, and encompassing almost insurmountable difficulties, the little band finally reached the Yellowstone, floated down on a raft to the Big Horn river and made camp on an island in the wildest and most hostile portion of the United States. The geography of the country was little known in those days. Most of their traveling had to be done in the night time, as the country was full of Indians, and therefore not being very able to distinguish the country roundabout as they passed through it at night, the range of mountains that loomed up in front of them one bright morning had neither name or location for them. Into these mountains they hurried, panning and prospecting as they went, and striking better pay the deeper and higher up the gulch they got. At last, coming to a wonderfully rich streak which prospected handsomely, a shaft was sunk to bed rock, which was only seven feet below, and here was found gold from the grass roots down, panning all the way from five cents to one dollar each trial. These frantic men made up their minds to stay all winter. They had plenty of powder and lead, the country was full of game, and so, without further delay, the little pioneer party began work in dead earnest for a long winter's stay. They whip-sawed lumber, built a dam across the creek, put up the sluice boxes, and sluiced from morning to night while the weather lasted. The average yield was about \$100 to the man per day until snow began to fly. When the water froze, and mining operations had to be suspended, Cox, Jones and Hulburt had about half a bushel each of bright sparkling nuggets and gold dust. Now came winter. The time was too valuable while the season lasted to waste it in building operations; but it was now getting late, and the boys industriously whip-sawed lumber and cut logs sufficient to erect a cabin and surround it with a stockade. This is the famous cabin that has been lost so many times. Hay was cut, too, for the five horses. One had been drowned in the Yellowstone. In the spring, when the water began to run again, the three men were at their sluice boxes and taking out just as much gold as ever. One day Hulburt suddenly returned to the cabin for some necessary article, leaving his two companions busily at work. Scarcely had he gotten out of sight when bang! bang! went a number of rifles, and Cox and Jones lay weltering in their blood. From a tree Hulburt saw the Indians strip, scalp and mutilate his comrades, after which the redskins followed the well-beaten trail up to the cabin and rifled the latter of every article or thing they wanted. They even attempted to set fire to the famous structure; but the logs were green and would not burn, thus sparing the celebrated building to future discovery. After awhile the Indians

left. Hulburt slipped quickly from his perch, gathered together a few necessary articles (the Indians had carried off the horses) packed his knapsack full of gold (burying such treasure as he could not carry), and without pausing to look around or even take a landmark, fled for his life. His route did not lie back over the old trail he and his two friends had come the year before, for the Indians had gone that way, but to the south, in the opposite direction, through a strange, wild, undiscovered country, over which no white man's foot had ever traveled before. After many days, when far away from the camp he arrived at a lofty precipice where to the east could be seen a vast stretch of open prairie, while to the west was a lofty range of mountains whose snow-capped peaks pierced the very clouds. Hoping to strike some trail if he trusted to the open, Hulburt struck boldly out over the prairie, and headed as near as he could judge, for the Platte crossing of the great transcontinental route to California. After eighteen days he did reach the North Platte river, ninety miles above Fort Laramie, at Reshaw's bridge,<sup>1</sup> and found himself on the old trail which he had passed over, fifteen years before, on his way to California. Here he met the first white people he had seen for nearly two years, except, of course, his slain companions. The country was then on fire over the news from Alder gulch. Rich diggings had been reported on Grasshopper and Alder in Montana, and the trend of the gold hunters was now toward the northwest instead of the setting sun, as was the case in 1849. Hulburt met a big stampede coming up the Platte bound for Montana. Without going back to the state or sending any word to his friends, he joined this party of El Dorado hunters, and was soon en route to the very country he had so anxiously been fleeing from during the previous thirty days. Going along, he told the story of his wonderful experiences to others, which resulted in a split in the crowd, with him heading a new stampede, in which he came near getting killed for his pains. To show the size of this division it is only necessary to state that Hulburt had no less than 140 wagons at his heels, with something like 550 men, women and children, and all of these crazy people going off on a mad, wild chase after the goose that had laid the golden egg for Hulburt in the first instance. Suffice it to say that they never found the mine. Hulburt proved a very bad pilot, and after leading his party everywhere without success until winter came on, he finally and reluctantly confessed that he was lost, and his famous cabin mine along with him. This man, whose word had been law in camp for so many days, was now an outcast and in danger of death by violence. Men and women sprang at him like tigers, crying 'Lynch him; he has lied to us; lynch him!' Preparations were made for an impromptu necktie party, and Hulburt was just about to be strung up, when the one individual in that crazy mob, who had a spark of humanity left in him, stepped to the doomed man's side and drew his revolver. That was enough. Sullen with rage, but cowed by one man's bravery, the lynching bee was postponed and poor wretched Hulburt's life spared. The Indians started on the war-path about this time, which made it an unhealthy country for white people; whereupon the Lost Cabin stampede hastened westward and scattered through the gulches in and about Virginia City, Montana. Hulburt was last seen in Virginia City in the fall of '64, since when the world has lost track of him, although it still remembers his famous though mythical lead. Hundreds saw the gold which Hulburt brought back with him from the Big Horn country, and since then a sort of blind faith has possessed many that the Lost Cabin mine really exists.

"Bart Beckley, a Colorado miner, spent a year of his life searching the Big Horn, Castle and Emigrant mountains for this wonderful lead, but at last he, like the rest, became disheartened and gave it up, although his belief in the existence of the mine was stronger at the close of the unsuccessful search than when he began it. Jack McDonald spent many years in the mountain mining camps, during a twelve-month of which he was lost to all save himself, somewhere on the southern slope of the Big Horn range. Suddenly Jack turned up all bustle and excitement, leaving hurriedly for Colorado, but there he was taken sick and died in a cabin on Buckskin creek, where the city of Leadville now stands. Before he breathed his last he called his friend and pard, Bart Beckley, to his side and told him of a lead in far-away Montana that he believed to be very rich. Years rolled on and Beckley, turning the story over and over in his mind finally decided to make an attempt to find this famous mine of McDonald's. He drifted thither among the mountains of the northwest, found himself first in the Black

<sup>1</sup> Reshaw's bridge was three miles east from where the city of Casper is now situated.

Hills, then in the Wood River country, and finally in the New World mining district, near the Big Horn. He recognized Cloud peak, the loftiest pile in the country, and strange to say from the accurate description given him by his friend, he was enabled to find McDonald's lead, which was half way up the side of the very mountain he was then exploring. But, alas, the dying man was either deceived or else distance lent enchantment to the view, for the supposed gold had turned out to be only copper, which would not have paid the cost of mining it at that lofty altitude and in that rugged country. Beckley confidently thought he was on the trace of the Lost Cabin mine, but his practiced eye told him at a glance that only copper lay before him, and he gave up the chase, returning to Colorado much disheartened and thoroughly disgusted. Not long after Beckley's failure another prospector from the southern mines, named Joe Sweeney, suddenly appeared in the Big Horn mountains, and spent days and days hunting for the lead that seemed to baffle all efforts at discovery. He finally stumbled upon a vein far up near the head of the Big Horn canyon, which he firmly believed to be an outcropping of the famous lode, if not the mother treasure herself. The news was telegraphed by the Associated press giving an account of the discovery, saying that the 'Lost Cabin lead was found at last.' The discovery was twenty-five miles long, 620 feet wide, and where cut by the stream which crossed it, showed a perpendicular depth of sixty feet. Pieces of it were knocked off and sent to McVicker, of Salt Lake City, for assay, and in two weeks a report came back showing 41.55 per cent of copper, with a trace of silver. A great lead had been discovered, for 50 per cent of the rock was pure metal; but there was not a sign of gold about it, and therefore it could not be the Lost Cabin.

"A short time afterward Jack Nye, a well known Nevada prospector, appeared in the Big Horn country, and was lost to view for several months. All at once he bounded into Bozeman, and startled the natives with the assertion that he had positively discovered the Lost Cabin lead. It was, like Sweeney's find, situated near the headwaters of the Big Horn, where the famous river gushes a torrent down out of the mountains, the stream in question cutting the ledge almost at right angles. At this point the lode was 250 feet wide, and Nye said it showed up sixty odd feet on the washed faces. He traced the lode across the country for twenty-five miles or more, finding it in places as much as sixty feet wide. Nye wired his father and uncle to come on without delay, but the result was easily foreseen, for the vein which Nye believed to be the much-sought for Lost Cabin was neither more or less than Joe Sweeney's old discovery. When Nye learned the truth, that another man had found the very same lead before him, and what was more, had given it up as no good, he, too, surrendered in disgust, and went back to Nevada a very badly disappointed man.

"About this time the Sitting Bull troubles came on, and the country where the Lost Cabin lead was supposed to be hid away became alive with hostile Indians. Old Touka-to-tonka (Sitting Bull) with over a thousand lodges, had his camp near the junction of the two Horn rivers, on the spot where Colonel Custer afterward found him and met his death. Notwithstanding the frightful dangers and almost certain death awaiting any white man who should have the hardihood to penetrate into the country, three white men did go prospecting up the Big Horn about this time, and made their way safely through the hostile regions, traveling nights and resting days, finally reaching the headwaters of the Little Big Horn in safety. Here these three venturesome spirits came across a body of ore so large and so rich that they could hardly credit the evidence of their senses. Old miners believe implicitly that all rich veins in a mineral country must be emanations from a backbone or mother lode. It was unquestionably the mother lode. If the mythical Lost Cabin lead really had an existence, there could be no doubt but what these hardy prospectors had actually stumbled upon it, for, from the descriptions given, it was certainly the largest body of rich quartz in the known world. But listen to the sequel. After working until their tools were worn out, the brave fellows built a boat with which to descend the river, loaded it down with nuggets and rich specimens, burying what they could not carry, and started down stream intending to float by night to the Yellowstone, and thence on by daylight, and night too, until civilization or a settlement was reached. The plan was then to return with sufficient men and supplies to withstand the attacks of the red men and work the new mine for all there was in it. If they had known that the camp which they intended



to steal past at midnight was the largest ever gathered together on the North American continent, stretching up and down the river for more than three miles, and containing between 5,000 and 6,000 warriors, it is probable they would have gone the other way and gotten out of the country with all possible haste. Their boat was discovered by an Indian dog whose single yelp set 10,000 other throats barking, and in their hurry to push forward the frail craft was upset in the rapids of the Little Big Horn, and the poor fellows were prisoners. Two of the men were instantly killed, but the third, in the darkness of the night, managed to effect his escape, and after wandering about for days and days without food and little or no clothing, finally reached a settlement, more dead than alive. He related his experiences, exhibited one or two nuggets of pure virgin gold in proof of his assertion, but could not give the exact location of the lode. Through his privations, sufferings and ponderings over his immense wealth his mind became unbalanced, and the poor fellow, unhappily, became insane; and afterwards, as the country opened up and Sitting Bull was conquered, it was then too late to return to the lead, for the only survivor who might have pointed out the doorway to untold millions was a babbling, senseless fool; his reason had left him."

Father Jean Pierre DeSmet became thoroughly acquainted with the country now embraced in Wyoming upward of eighty years ago, in the early '40's. This intrepid disciple of Loyola emigrated from Belgium to America in 1823, and, proceeding to St. Louis, soon founded the St. Louis university. His abilities as a naturalist, botanist, metallurgist and geologist were very marked. His love for these studies, and a genuine desire to elevate our savage races, soon led him to become a missionary among the Indians. Accordingly, in 1838, he commenced the career which gave him so much prominence, and in 1839, with two companions, drifted northward, destined for the fur-trading post of Fort Benton. The gentle manners and sincerity of Father DeSmet soon won for him the confidence and esteem of the Indians. For about ten years his travels and explorations among the northern tribes were practically unrestricted; he was free to go and come, and met with hearty welcomes from the savages. During these years of pilgrimage, Father DeSmet became well acquainted with the geological formation of the country, as well as with its geography and topography. From the forks of the Cheyenne on the east to the Great Salt Lake on the west, and from the headwaters of the Columbia river on the north to the Platte on the south, he was quite generally "at home." On his return to St. Louis from one of his long trips, just as the discovery of gold in California was made known, he heard some acquaintances expressing doubt as to the wonderful stories from the west. Turning to them he said, "I do not doubt it. I am sure there is gold in California," and after a moment's pause he quietly added, "I know where gold exists in the Rocky mountains in such abundance that, if made known, it would astonish the world. It is even richer than California!" Among those who knew him best his statements were taken for literal truth, and when asked to corroborate the assertion, he would make no explanation, saying that he had promised the Indians never to describe the location of this wealth. The story is

told that the Indians had handfuls of nuggets which they proposed manufacturing into bullets for an old pistol which the father had given to a prominent chief. DeSmet was taken to the spot from whence the nuggets were obtained, and found it to be immensely rich. He taught the savages the value of it; told them their beautiful country would soon be desecrated by white miners if the facts became known, and in return he promised never to reveal the secret of its location. To the question once asked him by a bishop of his church at Omaha, "Are those mines on the Pacific coast the ones you have told about?" the father answered in the negative, and then sorrowfully added, "But I fear it will not be many years until they are discovered, and then what will become of my poor Indians?" To army officers and others he often admitted his knowledge of the mines in the northwest, when closely pressed to do so, and many persons tried in various ways to extract more definite knowledge from him. It was then believed that a careful prospecting of the Big Horn and Wind River regions would certainly reveal the terra incognito.

While in Cheyenne, in 1868, he gave a most interesting and satisfactory account of northern Wyoming and the Yellowstone region. Among other things, he said, "There are a great many lovely valleys in that section, capable of sustaining a large population. The mountain scenery is truly grand, and the vast forests of timber, wonderful and invaluable. Often have I seen evidences of mineral wealth in this wonderful country at different places. The whole range of the Rocky mountains, from New Mexico to British America, is mineral bearing."

Old Jim Bridger, the mountaineer, who spent fifty years in the Rocky mountains, said, "In the spring of 1859 I was employed as a guide and interpreter to an exploring expedition of the government whose purpose was to explore the headwaters of the Yellowstone and Big Horn rivers, and various other streams in the Big Horn country. One day, after having traveled a few days in these regions known as the Big Horn, feeling thirsty, I got off my mule and stooped down at a small brook containing clear and inviting water from the snow-capped mountains to drink, my attention was attracted by the curious appearance of the bottom of the stream. It appeared to me like yellow pebbles of various sizes, from that of the head of a common pin to a bean and larger. Though well acquainted with the appearance of gold, I was somewhat in doubt of its being the precious metal, since it had never occurred to me that gold could be found in that locality; but my curiosity being excited, I scooped up a handful of the stuff, and rode up to Dr. Hayden and Captain Reynolds. Both at once pronounced it pure gold, and asked me where I had procured it. After I had told them where I had found it, Captain Rey-



nolds got very much excited, and insisted that I should cast it away, and not tell anyone of the party of the matter under any circumstances, he fearing that a knowledge of gold in such abundance and of such easy access would certainly break up his expedition, since every man would desert to hunt for gold. I very reluctantly complied with the officer's request. Since my first discovery of gold, I have found the same metal in that country while trading with the Indians, though not in such abundance as the first."

Before California was known as a mining country, an old free trapper named LaPondre, who always hunted and trapped alone, making long journeys into the Big Horn mountains, had in his possession several large nuggets sufficient to fill his bullet pouch. But in those days the value of gold in its crude state was not known amongst the trappers, they having come into this country young boys. Old man LaPondre stayed around Fort Pierre and exhibited his nuggets freely to his friends. He told them he was going to St. Louis, and if what he had in his hand was what he expected it was, he was done with trapping for furs, as he could find enough of the stuff to buy up the American Fur company whenever he liked. He left St. Pierre to go to St. Louis, telling the men to be on hand and stay 'round, as he was coming back in the spring, and would take them with him to the place where the gold was. He said it was lying free in the bed of a creek, on bed rock where there was any amount of it. When old man LaPondre arrived at St. Louis he showed what he called his yellow bullets, and found they were gold nuggets of great value. The American Fur company at once offered him great inducements to show them where he had found them and wanted to buy him out, but he refused to tell them or sell at any price, as he said the company did not always act on the square with the people in their employ, and he was going to have the first show for himself and his friends. LaPondre, after finding that he had made a wonderful discovery of gold, feeling rich on the strength of it, and knowing where he could make a good haul in the Big Horn if he got broke in St. Louis, took in too much bad whiskey, forced on him by some of the fur company's men, who wanted to get hold of his secret, and he died without disclosing anything about the place where the gold was to be found in the Big Horns.

It is true that many discoveries of intense historical interest are found in the Big Horn mountains, especially since the advent of the automobile tourists into that section. Unmistakable evidence of old battle grounds, where contending tribes fought for supremacy in the early days, are not uncommon; on these grounds are yet to be found many pieces of flint arrow and lance heads; port holes have been cut

through sandstones which were erected in piles and rows; trenches were dug where the warriors were protected from the flying shafts of their enemies and the partly decayed and weather-worn bones of many horses and buffalo are found scattered about the field. Then there are numerous tepee rings, where the Indian feast grounds were located and the peace conferences were held. A "medicine wheel," 250 feet in diameter, laid out in a great circle of stones in the shape of a wagon wheel, is one of the mysterious finds on these mountains. Tribal lore records that this "medicine wheel" was there hundreds of years ago, long before the white men first came into this part of the country, and the Crow Indians, who claimed this land for many years, say that they do not know what people built this great stone circle, nor can they explain the significance of it. With these discoveries being made, it is contended by some that it is not unlikely that the Lost Cabin mine will also be found, probably by some one who least expects to find it. Many old prospectors haunt these mountains from early spring until late in the fall, when they are driven out by the heavy snows, and there is not one of these old fellows but believes that this mine of untold wealth will some day be found. In the summer of 1922 the discovery was made of an aged, weather-beaten Mexican saddle in the main gorge of Big Canyon creek, on the eastern slope of the mountains, together with every evidence of ancient mine drifts, and this latest is the foundation for their encouragement and strength of belief that the mine was a reality and that it will some day be found. The remains of this old saddle were found cached in a group of cottonwoods alongside the stream, and although many of the old-time range men have examined the remains of this old saddle they all unite in saying that it had been made many, many years ago, and they had never before seen a saddle of the same make. It was cracked and withered, but the shelter afforded by the underbrush had preserved it in fairly good shape. The mine drifts extended along the bank of the stream; a deep fissure was found alongside this stream from which some loose gravel and rock was taken, and a sample of this debris assayed more than four thousand dollars gold to the ton. Then a thorough search was made to find where the gravel and rock came from, but like the Lost Cabin mine, its location is a deep, dark, perplexing mystery.

### MINING ON CASPER MOUNTAIN

For a number of years dazzling fortunes seemed to smile on the prospectors who staked out mining claims on Casper mountain in 1888-9. All were wrapped in visions of clustering millions. The lust

for gold permeated the land, and men left their stores and shops and offices and gave up their vocations to become miners and millionaires. Camps were established from the east to the west end and the north to the south side of the mountain. The sound of the pick and the drill and the blast of powder could be heard in all directions from early dawn until dusk. Everything was lively and everything was humming on the mountain in those days.

Reports were brought down from the hills each day by miners and related to the unfortunate business man who could not close up his doors and hie himself to the El Dorado. Excitement was rampant over the finds of silver and gold, copper and galena, and asbestos that were made by the fortunate men. The newspapers of Casper heralded the good news to the outside world with each issue. Some of these reports are herewith reproduced. After reading them, he indeed must be a pessimist who doubted the riches hidden away in the bowels of the mountain. In the summer of 1890, it was announced that "J. B. Smith and J. Allen struck a lead of ore on Casper mountain that was pronounced by one of the leading mining experts of England to be unusually rich in silver. The expert did not make an assay of it, but was of the opinion that it would be away up, and told the boys they had an immense thing if the lead was sufficiently large. They are at present engaged in opening the lead, which is a three and one-half foot ledge, dipping tolerably steep and gradually increasing in size."

On August 21 of the same year, it was proclaimed that "Interest in the Casper mountain mineral deposits is intensifying. Several families are residing on the mountain now, some in tents and others in cabins, and numerous parties have located claims there. An assay of the Smith and Allen ore was made and it showed that it carried \$666 in silver to the ton, and when the news reached here there was a great rush to the mountain to locate new claims."

The first mention of the finding of asbestos on Casper mountain was in September, 1890, when J. C. Hogadone brought samples to town and it was then said that "Asbestos will become an important factor in Wyoming's mining wealth, and it is but one of Casper's diversified interests." In the spring of 1891, we were told that "prospectors have met with highly satisfactory results in searching for asbestos on Casper mountain. Indeed, every stroke of the pick seems to have been prolific of excellent results, and deposits of asbestos have been exposed over a considerable area. The fiber ranges from two to nine and one-half inches in length, and the quality has been proven, by comparison, equal to the best product of other states and countries. Indeed, there is no longer any question about the quality.

The only thing now to be taken into consideration is the quantity, and as it is found extending over such a large tract of country, the quantity is probably sufficient. The prospects are so flattering that a number of our prominent business men have interested themselves in various claims this spring and will assist in the work of development. A dozen or more claims have been located thus far, comprising about three hundred acres, and good asbestos croppings have been exposed on every claim, though none of them have been penetrated more than six or eight feet. However, many of the claims are now being worked and are showing better every day. Several parties have refused good offers for their claims, all being desirous of developing and determining the value thereof, before selling."

About the middle of July, 1891, more than 100 asbestos claims had been taken up. During this time no actual money had changed hands, but transfers of mines were made and the boom continued without interruption. On August 6, 1891, it was said that the "reports from the mountain mining district are most flattering. A great amount of work is being done and surprising results are looked for this fall. Jack Currier has a force of men at work on his galena claims, while Messrs. Eads, Hogadone, Montgomery and others are working and have men at work developing their asbestos. A big boom is just about to open in this camp."

Professor Henry Zahn, a mineralogist from Chicago, arrived in Casper in August, 1891, and spent several days on the mountain. When he came down, he made the announcement that, "You have the perfect formation for asbestos, and the quality is as good as that of the Canadian mines." He spent the greater part of a day making examinations of specimens of ore he had brought down and he pronounced many of them free gold-bearing rock. He also said we had the greatest natural fuel on earth at our very door, that the coal in this vicinity was of the best, some of it being fine blacksmith coal, while one of the specimens would make good coke, and all of it would be good for the manufacture of bricklets, which are composed of coal and crude petroleum, the process being patented, and he was the owner of the patent.

On September 8, 1891, Professor Zahn took a thirty-day option on thirty-two asbestos claims on Casper mountain, the agreement being that each owner should have forty-nine per cent of the amount of stock issued on his claim. It was figured out that each claim would bring its owner \$3,300 spot cash, in addition to the forty-nine per cent of the non-assessable stock.

It is evident, however, that Professor Zahn gave up the asbestos claims and thought better of the copper prospects, for on October 1,

1891, he took an option on three of the most promising copper claims on the mountain, one from Chris Baysel, one from Charley Jones, and one from Abe Nelson. From this date until the summer of 1892, items of encouragement appeared in the local newspapers something like the following:

"The Zahn buildings are about completed and all arrangements for the comfort and convenience of the miners are being put in. Professor Zahn feels very confident that he will strike a big lead of copper, and says there is unlimited capital back of him to open up the mines, put in a smelter, and build a railroad from Casper to the top of the mountain if necessary. The ore is there, it is good, there is plenty of it, and the future of the camp is assured. Professor Zahn is much worked up over the finds that are being made and is anxious to get shafts down on the claims on which he has options. He has made cash offers for several properties, but the owners refused to consider them. The Zahn Syndicate is not idle. About two thousand pounds of freight, consisting of tools, powder, drills, and a complete blacksmith outfit, has been sent to the claims on the mountain along with extra men to work on the claims, there being day and night shifts working at two different points for this syndicate."

Early in March, 1892, a report was brought in from the Zahn Syndicate to the effect that a depth of twenty-eight feet had been reached and a soft lime formation that looked as though it had slaked and melted had been encountered. All through this formation lay traces of copper and copper stains and that the "lead" was within "smelling distance." The two claims being worked by this syndicate were known as the "Cross Fox" and the "Blue Cap."

Six of the claims upon which the syndicate had taken an option were released to the owners, Charley Jones, Matt Montgomery, Charles Hogadone, Chris Baysel, William Walls, and Charles Dasch. Nature's latch string on these claims was not hanging out as it was on the other claims and the six miners were somewhat disappointed, but not discouraged when their options were released.

"Important discoveries were again made by the Zahn Syndicate the latter part of March on its 'Cross Fox' claim. Just as soon as the discovery was made the shaft was locked, work was suspended, and no information would be given out as to what had been found. The syndicate had an option on this claim from John Johnson for \$10,000, but the money was not yet paid over. After work had been suspended on the 'Cross Fox,' the miners commenced to sink the shaft deeper on the Abe Nelson 'Blue Cap' lease, but the work was carried on so mysteriously on this claim that no one could ascertain the nature of the ore, none of which was brought to the surface, but was stored



away in a room which had been made in the side of the shaft. No one was allowed to enter the shaft except the employees."

About this time the professor left for Chicago where he remained two weeks, and when he returned the indications were that the bottom had dropped out of his "Cross Fox" and "Blue Cap" claims, for he made the statement that he would settle up all debts against the syndicate, but he would not say whether he would go on with the work. The sun did not shine as brightly on Casper mountain then as it had the year previous. The whole place looked desolate. The sound of the pick and drill and the blast of powder was not as pronounced and as frequent and the glittering reports were not brought down to the Casper business men as they had been. Instead of glee there was gloom for several years.

But in 1895 and 1896 life was infused into the almost deserted mining camp and the Casper Mountain Copper Mining company was incorporated, with J. L. Garner, president; John D. Allen, vice-president; F. H. Barrow, secretary, with a capital stock of \$10,000. The shares were to be sold at a dollar each and there were takers for the entire issue.

A local newspaper said: "This company has been operating on the mountain this winter, and has taken out some very fine ore. The lead has been tapped in several places, and the extent of the ore is inexhaustible. As soon as the snow leaves the roads passable, shipments to the Deadwood smelter will be commenced. This smelter will use twenty cars of our ore a day, and arrangements are being made to take the ore out in large quantities. This mine, when the work is fairly started, will prove a big thing for our city, and our citizens are looking forward to a prosperous mining year."

If twenty carloads of ore a day were ever shipped to Deadwood, or anywhere else, from Casper mountain, no mention of it was ever made in the local newspapers and it must be presumed that the Casper Mountain Copper Mining company discovered to its sorrow, like all the rest of the companies, that while there is an abundance of ore on this mountain, it does not carry enough copper, silver, or gold to pay for the mining of it.

But with all the discouragements and failures to find ore in this mountain rich enough to pay for mining it, we find that in October, 1897, A. E. Minium "made one of the greatest discoveries of gold-bearing rock yet discovered in Central Wyoming, or perhaps in the state, on the northeast slope of Casper mountain, about thirteen miles from Casper. Having brought samples of the quartz in, it was found to be free milling and a pan test showed that it run between \$3 and \$4. The vein which is a true fissure, has a width of sixty feet,



and a depth exposed of 120 feet. It has been traced over 5,000 feet long, and Mr. Minium staked off two claims 600 x 1,500 which he named 'Tillie Miller,' and 'Klondyke,' respectively. Robert Ottershagen, of South Dakota, accompanied Mr. Minium to the scene of his new discovery with a view of examining and passing judgment on the value of the property. He was so well satisfied with the ore that he traced it out and staked off a claim for himself the same size as Mr. Minium's, which he named 'Yukon.' When asked regarding the vein and kind and quality of the ore Mr. Ottershagen said the ore is a well defined fissure vein of white and blue gold bearing, or, at places, an iron stain auriferous quartz, on the north slope of Casper mountain between the heads of Hat Six and Goose creeks, and a million tons of the ore are actually in sight. No assays are received as yet, but it is believed the quartz is much richer than the surface pan tests. Mr. Minium will begin work at once, as will also Mr. Ottershagen and developments will be pushed as fast as work and weather will permit. The vein has granite walls."

Just about a month after this great discovery, it is recorded that "A. E. Minium sold to Theodore Becker and Tony Walters a one-third interest in the 'Tillie Miller' gold claim and the work of building a shanty is now in progress, after which the gentlemen propose to run a 150-foot tunnel, commencing at the base of the exposed lead, nearly 500 feet from the top of the lead, in Goose creek canyon. At an entrance of 150 feet, the gentlemen will be in nearly 200 feet perpendicular. Minium is not an experienced miner, and has associated Messrs. Becker and Walters with him and proposes to forge forward and learn the value of the ore. No doubt has been expressed as to the ore paying at the end of the 150-foot tunnel. Tools for driving the tunnel have been ordered and are expected to arrive at any time. The work of sinking a shaft on the Billy Mosteller claim, adjoining the 'Klondyke' claim, on the same lead, will be begun this winter, that is, it will be started and the work carried on next spring. F. W. Okie is connected with the Mosteller enterprise. Robert Ottershagen has an open cut made and it will be continued as a cross cut, until he will sink a shaft on his 'Yukon,' adjoining the 'Tillie Miller' on the east. The above is the work proposed on the recent gold leads, though without preparations they may do but little this year."

But, alas! "Tillie Miller," "Klondyke," and "Yukon" soon joined "Cross Fox," "Blue Cap," "Galena Queen," and the many others that had gone before and again the sound of the pick and the drill and blast of powder failed to disturb the quietude of the mountain.

In December, 1897, the greatest excitement prevailed in Casper over a strike that was made by Dr. J. F. Leeper, on the head of Elkhorn creek, and men on horseback and in buckboards flocked to the mountain in great numbers. Ore had been taken out of the old "Galena Queen" shaft at a depth of eighty-five feet and sent to Denver for an assay. The assayer's certificate showed that the ore indicated a run of \$1,012.83 to the ton. Within an hour after the report was received, every available means of transportation in town was procured and men were rushing to the mountain to stake out claims. Some of the men stayed on the mountain all night locating claims for themselves, as well as for their relatives and their friends. A few days after this report had been received and after the many claims had been properly staked and legally recorded, the mails brought a statement that a mistake had been made—that the assay should have been \$3.10, and once more all was gloom. Dr. Leeper said he was perfectly satisfied for he had known for at least twenty-four hours how it felt to be a millionaire.

In 1905, the "Blue Cap" was being worked again and it was reported that a "carload of copper ore would be shipped to the smelter at Denver, which, after paying all expenses, would net the company from \$700 to \$1,000. In about thirty days thereafter the company expected to ship a carload of copper concentrates which would net between \$3,000 and \$4,000." This beautiful dream also turned out to be a nightmare and it was not long until the "Blue Cap" was as innocuous as the other "great strikes."

Asbestos then again came into the limelight, with A. E. Minium as the chief promoter. Companies were organized and stocks were sold which netted the promoter many thousands of dollars. If the money had been expended for machinery and the improvement of the mines as it should have been, there is no doubt Casper would today have the largest asbestos plants in the world. Minium, on account of his fraudulent methods, narrowly escaped being sent to the penitentiary and at the same time gave the asbestos properties on Casper mountain a black eye. Ore is being taken out, however, and asbestos shingles, chimney blocks and tiling are manufactured.

A scenic road is cut through the mountainside to these mines and during the summer a great many automobile parties go to the mountain top on picnic and pleasure trips. Many homesteads have been taken up on the mountain and there are numerous comfortable cabins there where people spend the summer months. But even now, with all the past failures, every year new mines are located, new companies are organized, and new hopes are entertained of striking a "lead" that will produce millions.

## THE SODA LAKES

Soda deposits in Central Wyoming attracted wide interest among scientific men and capitalists of the eastern states as early as 1880. A few years afterwards men of money came from Europe to make an investigation of the wonderful deposits in the Sweetwater country, where there are half a dozen large soda lakes, covering a vast acreage. Concerning the deposits the United States Geological Survey report of 1886 says: "There are four claims under United States patents in the name of L. Du Pont by five eastern companies. The first claim covers 20,000 acres, of which five acres contain carbonate and sulphate of soda, averaging six feet deep. The second claim is about one mile west of the first; the soda is in solution. The third claim is one-fourth mile farther west and includes sixteen acres of soda solution, the depth of which has not been reached. It has been sounded forty feet without touching bottom. The solution contains 2,343 grains per gallon. The fourth and fifth claims are four miles west and are on the same lake of solid soda. The depth fifty feet from shore is four feet of solid soda. Two hundred and fifty feet from shore showed fourteen feet of solid soda without touching bottom."

Tom Sun, Boney Earnest and Frank Harrington were the first to make a filing on the land containing these soda deposits. These men built cabins in the vicinity of the lakes in the early '70's, but the Indians burned the cabins after they had stood for several years. Very little development work was done on the deposits and after the cabins had been burned by the Indians but little attention was paid to the claims by the owners. Some eastern men who passed through the country on a hunting trip told of the lakes when they returned home and in a short time L. Du Pont of Pennsylvania came to make an investigation for his associate capitalists. He first came to Rawlins and made the trip to the Sweetwater country with the intention of filing on the land, but when he arrived he found Tom Sun holding down the land and ready to back up his claim with a Winchester rifle. It did not take Du Pont and Tom long to reach an agreement and when Du Pont returned home he was in possession of the land, having purchased a relinquishment from the three men above mentioned and in due time he was given a patent by the government, which was the first patent given to soda land in Wyoming. Development work was at once commenced and continued on the deposits year after year by E. C. Merrill, who was field manager for the Du Pont companies.

D. Harvey Attfield of Walford, England, made a special trip to the United States with a view of purchasing these soda lakes. He

arrived in Rawlins in February, 1891, and after traveling from Rawlins to the lakes in a buckboard, a distance of sixty miles or more, over rough roads and through the severe cold weather, he became disgusted and would not consider the purchase of the land. He said he would rather make the trip from Liverpool to Rawlins than from Rawlins to the Sweetwater soda lakes, and he returned home fully convinced that the country was too rough and the weather too severe to spend any of his time or money here.

On January 14, 1892, there were filed in the office of the secretary of state at Cheyenne articles of incorporation for the Syndicate Improvement company, composed principally of Chicago capitalists. The object of the syndicate as stated in its articles of incorporation, was to buy and sell lands, build smelters, develop mines and oil property and build pipe lines in Natrona county, with offices at Chicago and Casper. The capital stock was placed at \$3,000,000, divided into 30,000 shares of \$100 each. The incorporators were John Weir, Arthur Townsend and James D. Negus. Negus was the man who conceived and carried through the survey of the Pacific Short Line railroad and built the road from Sioux City, Iowa, to O'Neill, Nebraska. This syndicate had purchased an interest in the land from the Du Pont company and it was announced that they would build a railroad from Casper to the soda lakes. The people of Casper and those living along the proposed new railroad were highly elated over the encouraging prospects for a bright and prosperous future. During the first part of February, the syndicate received in Casper a carload of freight, consisting of tools, implements and supplies of every kind, including six large tents, 18 x 30 feet, which were to be used for storage rooms and cooking and sleeping apartments for the force of men employed at the lakes putting up vats. It was announced that the company intended starting a new town at the lakes and would run a regular train of freight wagons between the new town and Casper, hauling soda for shipment to Chicago. Two more carloads of machinery arrived on February 24 and was immediately taken to the syndicate's properties.

J. D. Negus, head of the syndicate, arrived from Chicago on the first of March, 1892, and he said that the syndicate had more than one hundred thousand pounds of machinery which would be sent to the lakes at once. He said the plant that was being erected at the lakes was an experimental one and if it proved a success, a business of great magnitude would be started at Independence Rock.

On March 9, 1892, John Weir, C. B. Waite, and W. Trainer, of New York, Chester B. Bradley of Chicago, and Charles H. Kelsey of Denver arrived in Casper and the next day started for the soda lakes

to confer with Negus, who was on the grounds with a crew of workmen putting the machinery in place for the soda works. Chester B. Bradley was attorney for the syndicate and located in Casper permanently. The other gentlemen were stockholders in the syndicate.

The work of installing the machinery continued during the summer. A great many people were employed at the works, a post office was established, and the town of Johnstown was born to "cast its sweetness on the desert air." A number of houses were built there and Johnstown had hopes and prospects of becoming one of the leading centers of Central Wyoming. Shafts were sunk and timbered and tons upon tons of soda were taken out. Strings of freight teams were on the road hauling out supplies and bringing in the soda for shipment, but in time the railroads raised the freight rate on the product, and this, together with the mining and hauling of it to Casper by freight teams, put the cost up to more than the market price for it. Work was soon suspended and the property abandoned.

On April 20, 1894, after the syndicate had practically abandoned its works at Johnstown, a correspondent from Independence Rock said, "Johnstown has lost nearly all its inhabitants, there being only two families there now, and they are thinking of going away soon." At the term of the district court held in Casper in May, 1895, Chester B. Bradley secured a judgment against the Syndicate Improvement company for \$3,741.54 and costs, amounting in all to \$4,125.29, and the property of the company was sold under attachment for the amount. This ended the operations of the company and at the same time took Johnstown off the map and put her in the same class with Bothwell, Bessemer, and Eadsville.

There are three small soda lakes several miles north from Casper covering about forty acres, which are owned by John D. McGill. Mr. McGill has owned this property since 1895 and has built a refinery nearby and the product is being disposed of as rapidly as it can be refined. It is hauled to Casper by truck and shipped to market from here by railroad. On account of the fact that the entire output always finds a ready market and that the property is not for sale the enterprise receives but little attention from the public.

### TOM WAGNER'S FAKE MINE

Central Wyoming's greatest mining swindle was perpetrated by Tom Wagner in 1897 and 1898. There have been many disappointments in mines in the state and much time and money have been lost in various enterprises, but, in nearly all cases those concerned were



acting in good faith. Wagner's promotion was a premeditated and absolutely dishonest proposition.

Wagner was a cowpuncher who had ridden the range around the Point of Rocks and the Pedro mountains in 1885. He left the country but returned in June, 1897, and, after being up in the Point of Rocks neighborhood a few months, came down with a wagonload of ore which he hauled to Deadwood. The ore showed a run of \$1,000.50 net, and there was a gold rush precipitated immediately. Some experienced miners returned to the Point of Rocks with Wagner and forty-three claims were staked off for Wagner, and he sold claims to others for \$50 or \$100, which sums he said were to be used to pay for the assessment work. Wagner bought the Indian Grove ranch, and stocked it with horses and cattle and he and his miners lived there during their operations. He did not pay for the ranch or the stock, however.

The *Wyoming Derrick* of January 13, 1898, said that "after his first forty-three claims were legally staked and the discovery and assessment work all done in compliance with the laws, he (Wagner) came to Casper after three four-horse-team loads of mining tools and camp supplies and provisions. This was six or seven weeks ago, and Mr. Wagner freely told of his wonderfully rich strike. A week or so previous to that time Professor A. W. S. Rothermel, of New York City and the Black Hills, who is associated with the F. E. & M. V. Railway company, and other mining experts, visited the Indian Grove ranch, and carried back with them some of the quartz broken from the ledge, which has caused a manifest interest in the Pedro gold discovery, upon the part of those high in financial and mining circles of surrounding and eastern and southern states.

"Since the first of December a number of old-time and experienced miners, friends, and acquaintances of Mr. Wagner, have come from the Black Hills, gone to Pedro mountains, and become infatuated with the gold-bearing rock, while capitalist friends of Mr. Wagner in Deadwood, Montana, Texas, Kansas City, Omaha, Chicago, and Pennsylvania have urged upon him their claims to invest unlimited money in developing the property, and erecting stamp mills and smelters.

"The entire discovery is in Carbon county, about three miles south of the Natrona county line, across the south and middle fork of Canyon creek. The principal lead is on an average of sixteen feet wide, and the quartz is said by the miners working it, to be a facsimile of the Cripple creek quartz. It is a refractory ore, yet it contains carbonates, some of which were scraped from the ore dump at the Mena mine and the dirt containing the carbonates assayed \$117.50."



Every time Wagner came to Casper, he was surrounded by excited citizens who were anxious to know the latest developments. Wagner, in a friendly, artless manner would tell of the latest wonders unearthed in his "El Dorado." Claims were staked off by some Casper men, who made many trips over the long, rough road back and forth from the place where their millions were lying waiting to be blasted from the rock.

Tom Wagner's mines were not his only assets. His qualities were thus disclosed by the *Wyoming Derrick*: "One of the commendable traits of Mr. Wagner is shown in his staking off three claims of placer ground in one branch of Canyon creek for some orphan children in a distant state. It has been more than twenty years since he left home, and at that time he was asked by his mother to promise her that he would never drink intoxicating liquors. He granted the request and made a further voluntary promise that he would not return home till he had acquired a fortune. Both pledges he has kept, never touching liquor to his lips, or returning to his parental home which he longs to visit and will visit within a few months now."

The bubble grew and grew and plans were made for stage coaches, post office and mail service, smelters, beautiful homes, and all the comforts to be secured by great wealth. In February, F. K. Guston of Chicago, L. W. Cummings of Fort Worth, and L. S. Sanderson, a mining man from Denver, went out to the "mines," and describing what they found, the *Rawlins Republican* of February 17 said: "All the parties returned at noon Tuesday completely disgusted and highly indignant at the deception that had been practiced upon them. They said that about two years ago Thomas Wagner was serving a term in the Montana penitentiary for some offense, understood to be cattle rustling. Previous to his advent into Montana, Wagner was a cowpuncher in Texas and enjoyed the acquaintance of Captain W. H. Kingsbury of San Antonio, Texas, a prominent cattleman of that section. It was stated that it was through Captain Kingsbury's influence that Wagner secured a pardon. A few months ago Captain Kingsbury received a letter from Wagner giving a glowing account of the alleged rich discoveries of gold and copper in the Ferris mountains and stating that out of consideration for Mr. Kingsbury's kindness to him, the latter had located one claim in his name. Wagner continued to write of the exceedingly bright outlook for the camp until Kingsbury was fully convinced that a great bonanza had been discovered. Messrs. Evans and Guston, auditor and treasurer, respectively, of the Seattle and Yukon Steamship company, operating extensively in Alaska and Mexico, are friends of Kingsbury. As they were going through to Seattle, he advised them to stop off here

and visit the new 'El Dorado,' which out of consideration for the old gentleman, who is now in feeble health, they promised to do. Mr. Sanderson is a son-in-law of Captain Kingsbury and he intended to accompany Messrs. Guston and Evans from Denver, but missed the train and was compelled to follow the next day. Mr. Guston said that upon their arrival at the Indian Grove ranch, which Wagner claims to have bought from S. B. Parkin's some time ago, they discovered that the alleged rich mines are a myth. No assessment had ever been attempted upon any of the forty-three claims located, except the one called the Mena, and that has a hole 10 or 12 feet deep, and it is alleged that the rock taken from this so-called shaft does not contain a bit more mineral than the surrounding country rock."

When the party arrived, Wagner was not at home. He had been accused of dishonesty the day before by Dr. Pringle, whom he had tricked along with the rest, and he had also heard that a mining expert was on his way from Deadwood to investigate the mines. The man who had loaned him some of the money he had been using in his scheme was sending the expert before advancing any more. In the face of the imminent exposure, Wagner took his best horse, his rifle, and all the cash he had and departed. He had not paid his miners a cent of wages and they were stranded in Casper until advanced money to proceed to Deadwood.

The ore that had been taken to Deadwood for an assay was genuine rich ore and the assay was honest. It had not been mined from the Wagner claims, however, but had been brought over from the Ferris mines. The rich ore lying about the Mena mine was from the same place. Wagner had practiced the old "salting" trick, but he did not even take the trouble to do it carefully. The people were ripe and ready to be picked and he found the picking good. The ore inside the shaft was worthless, and did not show even a trace of gold.

Wagner left with several thousand dollars, but he did not reap the enormous sums he hoped for. However, if he had not been interrupted for a few more months, he no doubt would have made a much richer haul.

### THE RAINMAKING FAKE

Mining fakes were not the only means of extracting the coin of the realm from the innocent and unsuspecting public thirty years ago any more than today, but there are now new modes of procedure. In those days, we had the rainmaker faker.

On August 6, 1891, Frank Melbourn of Canton, Ohio, the world-renowned and original rainmaker, arrived in Casper under contract to produce numerous showers. He claimed to produce rain by means

of a mechanical device which he had invented and which the public was not permitted to see. He set up his apparatus Saturday night and Sunday there was a rainfall of only a few minutes. The dust was not settled by the "downpour," but Melbourn and his friends were highly elated over his success. He announced that the following Sunday he would have it rain a-plenty, but again only a few drops fell. When asked the cause of the light rain, Melbourn said he did not desire to make it rain very hard as he wanted to see the base ball game, and a heavy rain would, of course, prevent the game. Melbourn was a great lover of all kinds of sports and said he did not want to interfere with them. He turned on the machine Friday evening and kept it running until early Saturday evening when, by the condition of the atmosphere, he saw that the operations had been successful and that rain was coming. He then turned off the machine and relied on the work already performed to bring the desired result. But the rain failed to come and Melbourn left town.

From Casper he went to Cheyenne, where he set up his machine in a barn loft. Several days after the mysterious machine was in operation there was a light shower, which lasted about fifteen minutes, but an hour later the heavens were suddenly overcast with clouds and the windows of heaven were opened and the waters of the flood were upon the earth and the fountains of the great deep came forth and the parched earth was soaked. Some people in Cheyenne were still skeptical and after a week's rest Melbourn again turned on his machine and again there was a heavy fall of moisture.

The next summer was an unusually dry one in Wyoming and some of the people sent for Melbourn. He took his machine to the dome of the capitol building and two days after it had been put in operation there was a heavy rain on Horse creek, a light rain in Rawlins, and a fairly good downpour near Uva, but none in Cheyenne. Melbourn claimed the credit for the rain at these points, but the people refused to pay him for his efforts and he packed up his machine and went to Kansas where the people were in great distress on account of the lack of moisture. Melbourn reaped a rich harvest there, but the farmers failed in their crops because of the failure of Melbourn's rainmaking machine to make good.

After that, there was no profit in the rainmaking business and that was the last that was heard of it in Wyoming.

## BRIDGES ACROSS THE PLATTE RIVER

The first bridge built across the North Platte river in this part of the country was constructed in 1854 and '55, by John Reshaw, or

Richard, a French-Canadian. The structure was built of logs, and it was located about three miles east from where Casper now is situated, being a short distance east from the W. T. Evans ranch. Reshaw's little cabin, blacksmith shop and a few other buildings were located on the south side of the river and he did a thriving business in the spring and summer when the water in the river was high. For crossing the bridge he made his own price, which the emigrants were compelled to pay. He usually charged \$5.00 for a team and wagon to go over his bridge. If the water in the stream was so low that the emigrants would take a chance in swimming their animals across, Reshaw would reduce the price to \$3.00 and sometimes he would charge only \$2.00. From fifty cents to one dollar was charged for each person to go across, and for each animal that crossed over the bridge not included with the team hitched to the wagon, the same charge was made as for a person. Reshaw generally received gold as his toll. He had no difficulty in securing all the furniture and other household necessities he required from the emigrants, who generally overloaded their wagons when they started from the east, and if they had not discarded it along the trail before they reached the Reshaw bridge, they willingly gave him the luggage that was proving a burden and would necessarily have to be discarded before they crossed the mountains.

Reshaw was married to a squaw, and five or six children were born, several of whom are yet living (1922). Mrs. Bateese Pourrier, whose home is at Manderson, S. D., is one of the daughters of the Reshaws, and she returned to Casper in 1918, and in company with James H. Bury, made a visit to the spot where the bridge spanned the river, and pointed out to him where their little home, the blacksmith shop and a number of other small buildings were located. Mrs. Pourrier was also familiar with the location of the buildings, the bridge, etc., located at Fort Caspar, having lived in this part of the country until 1867.

The Reshaw bridge was burned by the Indians in 1867, and a short time after its destruction Reshaw and his family moved to what was then known as the Red Cloud agency on the White river, east from Fort Laramie. In 1875 Reshaw and Al Palladie were shot and killed at Running Water Crossing, which was between the Red Cloud Agency and Fort Laramie. Reshaw was supposed to have had a considerable amount of money with him. Suspicion pointed toward a man who was known by the name of "California Joe," as the murderer, and the Indians were not long in avenging the death of the two men by killing Joe.

There is a legend in connection with the Reshaw bridge, or the Guinard bridge, the latter being commonly known as the Platte

bridge, to the effect that the owner, after having accumulated considerable wealth, became mentally unbalanced, and one moonlight night filled his pockets with gold dust, went out on the bridge and exclaimed: "You have given me all my wealth; I now give back to you a tithe!" And then he cast handfuls of gold into the water.

Mrs. Pourrier says her father never did anything like that, therefore it must have been Louis Guinard of the Platte bridge. The story has been often told, and it being too good to be declared a canard, and there being no one to deny that Guinard did it, the legend must stand, and Mr. Louis Guinard, who built the Platte bridge, directly north of Fort Caspar, shall have the credit for having thus disposed of a tenth of his wealth which he gained by overcharging the poor emigrants for crossing his bridge, which, in this age, would be termed profiteering. Therefore it would seem that in those days human nature was just about the same as it is in this year of our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-three, in regard to charging excessive prices. But, withal, it must be noted that there has been some change, for there is no record of the profiteers nowadays returning a tithe of their wealth from whence it came, or even casting bread upon the water, as they should have been taught to do.

The Platte bridge, built by Louis Guinard during the fall and winter of 1858-9, which was located about one and one-half miles west from Casper, is said to have cost \$60,000 in its building. Concerning this bridge and others in this part of the country we quote from Coutant's History of Wyoming:

"Early in the fifties Louis Guinard built a toll bridge on the Sweetwater river, a short distance below Independence Rock, and during the seasons of high water he did a paying business. He had a sort of sliding scale of prices, intended to be adjusted to the flood in the river. If the stream was running very high he charged \$10.00 for a wagon and its teams. If the water was lower the charge was \$5.00, and he also had a \$3.00 rate. Guinard was a French Canadian and had a squaw for a wife, with whom he lived until the time of his death. He had two nephews, half-breeds, who lived with him. As has been related, the Mormons, in 1847, established a ferry for their own convenience on the North Platte, where Fort Caspar was afterwards built. This ferry was kept up for a number of years, but there was always difficulty in keeping track of the boat. Mormon emigrants were instructed before leaving the east to build a raft at this ferry in the event of their being unable to find the regular boat. About the time the bridge on the Sweetwater was built, John Reshaw, or Richard, bridged the North Platte at a point several miles below the Mormon ferry. He did a good business there, but was much annoyed because people refused to pay his prices and went up to the ferry and crossed somehow, either in a boat or on a raft. In those days the horses were driven across the ford, but the wagons were carried over on the improvised ferry boat, also the people and their effects. At last some one put in a good boat and stretched a rope across the stream, establishing a regular boat and ferry. This was too much for Reshaw. He stormed, roared, and finally gave the parties running the ferry \$300 to stop business. He did not, however, purchase the ferry boat and rope, but he had secured the traffic for his bridge. W. H. Carmichael, who now resides at Wheatland, passed over the Overland trail in 1859, being one of the company going to California. The train was a large one, and when it reached Reshaw's bridge, the leader entered



into negotiations with Reshaw for crossing. The price was fixed at \$2.50 per wagon and the emigrants made up their minds they could do better by going to the ferry. Reshaw informed them that the ferry was a thing of the past and no longer existed, but the leader of the train did not choose to believe a statement that was made so clearly in the interest of the toll-bridge keeper, and consequently he proposed to go on up to the ferry. Reshaw then notified him that if he persisted in going on, he would be obliged to come back and cross the bridge at last, and if he did return, double price would be charged, that is, \$5.00 a wagon. On went the train toward the ferry, and on arriving there they found the rope down and the ferry boat moored on the opposite side. The water was high, but a man was placed on a horse and took a rope across. After considerable delay and no little hard work, the ferry was re-established and the families, teams and goods were rapidly transferred to the north bank of the river. All but four teams had been taken over when Reshaw, accompanied by three men, all heavily armed, put in an appearance, and seeing the situation, his indignation knew no bounds. He abused and threatened those on shore, remarking that he had influence with the Indians and would see to it that they followed the train and despoiled the emigrants of all they possessed. George Morris, one of the emigrants, refused to be bulldozed, and drawing a revolver, covered Reshaw with it and ordered him to get in the boat and accompany a load that was going across, informing him at the same time that he would stand no more of his abuse, but that he might make his complaint to the leader of the train, who was on the other side of the river. Reshaw went over, and when he reached the other side of the river he burst out anew and fairly astonished the people of the train with his violent language. It so happened that the parties to the dispute were standing near a wagon which was occupied by a sick man. Reshaw heard the click of the rifle as it was cocked, and looking around to see where it came from, discovered that the invalid had him covered with his rifle and seemed to be fully determined to hold his advantage. This brought an end to the scene and Reshaw and his armed ruffians started back down the river, but with a parting malediction on the heads of the emigrants, threatening them with 500 savages, who at his bidding would capture the train, scalp the people and run off their stock. He then left, amid the jeers of the party. As soon as he had departed, a subscription was taken up and \$25.00 raised and paid to the owner of the boat for its use. The train now proceeded on to the west. Reshaw's threat was not carried out, as no Indians followed or disturbed the emigrants.

"The Platte bridge was the most notable structure of its kind in this part of the country in early times. It was finished, it was said, at a cost of \$60,000. It was of cedar logs, built on cribs filled with stone and made to resist the current of the river and time. Martin Oliver of Casper, who, when he first came to the country, worked on the bridge, says that it was commonly reported that Guinard came from the Sweetwater with \$30,000 in cash, and this sum he put in the new bridge before it was completed, and that he spent every year large sums in building new piers and structural work. This, then, is the \$60,000 which the bridge is said to have cost."

The Indians set fire to this bridge and it was entirely destroyed shortly after the fort was abandoned, in 1867. Evidence of this old bridge is yet very plain on either side of the river, where, on the south side, there are seventeen stone piers, which were used to fill the log cribs that were built to support the structure and resist the current of the river. On the north bank of the stream, about two hundred yards west from the town of Mills, there is one stone pier, or pile of rock, which is visible only when the water is low.

A man named Guinard worked on a ranch in Bates Park during the summer of 1911, and he said that Louis Guinard was his uncle. "My uncle and my father went out on the bridge one night to have a talk," he said, "and my uncle 'fell' over into the water and was



drowned. My father then took charge of the store at the trading post nearby the fort, which was owned by uncle, and he also took all of his other property. My father was not married at that time, but a few years later he married a squaw, and a number of children were born." The man who told the story was one of the offspring of this marriage, and judging from the acts of lawlessness he committed, the disregard of the rights of others was handed down from sire to son, and the father was no doubt capable of causing his brother to "fall" over the bridge and drown in the river. The story of the "accident" which occurred on this bridge has been confirmed by men who were in this part of the country at the time, but as there were no courts of law here at the time, and as there was no way of proving that Louis Guinard did not fall off the bridge, nothing was ever done about the matter, except to make a search for the body, which was never found, but after several months one of the high-top leather boots he wore was found and part of the man's leg and foot were in it. These were given to his squaw wife who hung up the boot and its contents in one of the rooms of her cabin and for many months mourned over it in the regular Indian fashion.

The fact that Guinard's squaw wife did not take possession of her husband's property after his death may seem strange, but in those days the squaw wife had very few rights and privileges even while her husband was living, and none at all after his death.

During the winter of 1888-9 the Northwestern Railway company built a wagon bridge across the Platte river about a mile west from Casper, for the convenience of the stockmen and ranchmen in this part of the country who shipped their stock to market from this point. This bridge was built of piling and plank, and after it was completed was turned over to the county free of charge, with the provision that the county should keep it in repair. Every year a considerable amount of money was expended for repairs on this bridge, and in 1919 the necessity for a new bridge was realized, when on February 12 a count of the vehicles and horses was made that crossed the structure in eight hours and it was found that ninety-one auto trucks, seventy-five wagons, 230 head of horses and 121 passenger automobiles passed over. The new concrete bridge, immediately west from the old bridge built by the railroad company, was commenced in the fall of 1919 and was completed in August, 1920. The concrete bridge across Casper creek, only a short distance west from the river bridge, was built at the same time, the cost of the two bridges being \$90,000, the expense being divided between Natrona county, the Wyoming State Highway association and the Midwest Refining company. The river bridge consists of ten forty-four foot spans and

the Casper creek bridge has a 170-foot span. The old plank bridge built by the railway company was torn down during the winter of 1921.

During the summer of 1922 a plan was devised by the Casper Chamber of Commerce whereby the new bridge should be lighted during the night time, by eleven pedestal or standard lamps on each side of the bridge, the current for which is furnished by the Standard Oil company and the civic organizations of Casper. Each furnished one standard with a name plate on each pedestal. The organizations which furnished the pedestals are the Natrona County Pioneer association, St. Mark's Episcopal guild, Casper Lodge No. 15, A. F. & A. M., Casper Volunteer Fire department, City of Casper, Natrona County Woolgrowers' association, Casper Civic club, I. O. O. F. lodge, Spanish War Veterans, Chamber of Commerce, Redmen lodge, Knights of Columbus, Boy Scouts, American Legion, Elks' lodge, Rotary club, Daughters of American Revolution, Kiwanis club, Lions club, Casper Women's club, Order of Eastern Star, and the Business and Professional Women's Club of Casper.

The Bessemer bridge across the Platte river was built in 1889 by the Wyoming Improvement company. The bridge across the river at Alcova was built in 1894, and the government bridge across the Platte was built in 1905 when the Pathfinder dam was being built. Several bridges have been built across the Sweetwater, one in 1894 by C. R. Countryman and the latest one being built immediately west from Independence Rock in 1920. The Chicago & Northwestern Railway company and the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railway company each have bridges across the river at Casper, and the Midwest Refining company and the Standard Oil company have bridged the river a number of places immediately west from Casper, until now bridges across the river are not given a thought, but in the early days, even since Natrona county was organized, the river bridges at Alcova, Bessemer and Casper were considered of vast and vital importance.

## Casper Village, Town and City

THE first buildings to be erected in Casper were put up during the month of June, 1888. They were located on a strip of ground about three-fourths of a mile east from where the Natrona county court house now stands, the exact locality being between First and A streets, and between McKinley and Jefferson. There were not more than a dozen business buildings on this spot, half of which were facing south and the other half looking to the north.

The main street, running east and west, was less than 500 feet in length. This was the business section of the town, the residence portion being composed of a few tents that were put up in the immediate rear of the business houses. All these buildings were but temporary structures, being erected in which to transact business only until the permanent site for the town could be surveyed and platted by the Pioneer Townsite company, this company being virtually the land department of the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railway company.

The material used in the construction of most of the buildings was rough boards, hauled down from the saw mill, which was located on Casper mountain, the roofs of the buildings were corrugated iron and the flooring of most of them was just plain gumbo with the sagebrush and cactus cleared off. There were a few who carried on their business in tents. Although the population of the village was less than one hundred, it contained several general merchandise stores, a drug store, hotels, restaurants, and saloons. The old-time residents refer to this as "tent town," or "old town."

Cowboys and Indians were Casper's most numerous and frequent visitors in those days. When the cowboys came in there was always a lively time. They spent their money freely at the stores and over the bar, and when their systems became sufficiently saturated with "forty-rod" whiskey, they were allowed to whoop and yell, howl and fight and shoot, and no one would say them nay. They came to town to have a time; they paid for it, and everybody felt they were entitled to all the pleasure they could get out of it. Two or three days was about as long as any of the cowboys remained in town, for at the end of that time their money was gone and they were probably in debt; they had been sufficiently entertained, and their physical condition craved the open range and pure, fresh air.

Among the people who were in business in the "old town" and who are yet residents of the city of Casper are P. C. Nicolaysen and A. J. Cunningham. Mrs. E. C. Jameson, who is living on her ranch in the Ervay country, was also one of the first settlers in the old town. Many of the cowboys who were in this part of the country at that time have since become residents of the town.

The first railway train arrived in Casper on June 15, 1888, and this event was the occasion for a celebration by the residents and visitors long to be remembered and never to be regretted. The present town site had not yet been surveyed when the railroad was built in, and it was in the late fall of 1888 before any of the lots were sold, and none of the business houses were moved from the "old town" to their permanent location until about the middle of November of that year. The land department of the Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley Railway company had entered into an agreement with J. M. Carey & Brother to the effect that the Pioneer Townsite company and the Carey company were to own every alternate lot in the town, and instead of advertising Casper extensively in the east, and running excursion trains to this point and selling the lots at auction, as had been the custom of the railway company in all the new towns along the line, the lots in Casper were sold at private sale, and at a very reasonable price, and for this, as well as several other reasons, it was expected that the road would be extended at once to a point west from here. The town of Bessemer, fifteen miles northwest, on the opposite side of the river, had been assured that the road would be extended to that point, but it was not extended and Casper was the terminus from 1888 until 1905, when work was commenced to extend the road to Lander, the present terminus.

The prospects for Casper in the early days to grow beyond a shambling, temporary frontier village were anything but inviting. Nearly all that portion of land north from the Northwestern railway, between Midwest avenue and A street, north and south, and Ash and Beech streets, east and west, was but sand and sagebrush, and this was the spot selected for the townsite. A part of this sand and sagebrush flat is where the largest buildings in the city are now located, and some of the vacant lots are now being sold as high as \$1,000 per front foot, while others, in the heart of the business section, could not be bought for twice that amount.

The first business lot to be sold in Casper was lot 13, in block 8, which is on the northwest corner of Second avenue and Center street, where the Stockmen's National bank is located. Nathan S. Bristol was the purchaser, and on this lot he put up a frame building 25 x 50 feet, in which he carried a stock of groceries and a line of grain and



SOUTH SIDE OF MAIN STREET IN 1888—"OLD TOWN" OF CASPER



NORTH SIDE OF MAIN STREET IN 1888—"OLD TOWN" OF CASPER





stock feed. The employees of the store slept in this building, and for the first year or more their bed was surrounded with sacks of grain and flour to protect them from the bullets which were fired in the night time by some of the cowboys who often came in from the range to celebrate.

The first building to be moved from the old town to the platted town was Robert White's saloon, which was located on the first lot south of the Grand Central hotel building. When the town was three months old, the following-named firms were engaged in business here: C. H. King & Co., general merchandise, A. J. Cunningham, manager; N. S. Bristol & Co., general merchandise, W. A. Denecke, manager; A. McKinney, groceries, Peter O'Malley, manager; Wyoming Lumber company, George Mitchell, manager; Metcalf & Williams, clothing and men's furnishings, J. E. (Humpy) Evans, manager; Bank of Casper, George Weber, cashier; Pioneer Drug Store, owned by C. F. G. Bostleman; M. D. Clark's candy store, harness shop and restaurant combined; *Casper Weekly Mail*, Lombard and Casebeer, publishers; C. K. Bucknum, livery stable; Jameson & Eads, livery; Adams & Williams, livery; O'Neill & Co., hardware; Graham House, David Graham, proprietor; Wentworth House, R. A. Parks, proprietor; Mrs. P. A. Demorest, restaurant; John Hogadone, restaurant; Mrs. Hanagan, restaurant; Mrs. Belle Clark, restaurant; C. C. Wright, attorney; B. F. Emery, attorney and justice of peace; J. W. Van Leer and Dr. J. Benson, jewelers, doctor and barbers; Matt Campfield, barber; Robinson & Osborne, carpenters; E. Erben, carpenter; John Merritt and J. W. Spragur, dealers in oil land; Joe Dolis, shoe repair shop; Dan Howe, painter; McNair & Co., meat market; P. Hanahan, dray; the Stock Exchange, P. C. Nicolaysen, proprietor; Robert White's saloon. There were four saloons in the town, but the names of all the proprietors are not obtainable. John Merritt was the first peace officer, being deputy sheriff of Carbon county, Natrona county not yet having been segregated from Carbon. James A. Hartman was the first postmaster.

There were no buildings erected on the south side of the Northwestern railway tracks for nearly ten years after the town lots were first platted, except Oscar Hiestand's residence, which was constructed in 1896. This is the residence on south Center street, two lots north from the Catholic church. A great many people who contracted for lots on that side of the track, in the belief and hope that the town would grow and expand very rapidly, in a few years turned them back to the original owners, before they were fully paid for. In the summer of 1898, however, there were a few dwellings built on the south side, and in '99 there were more. Since that time there has been

an increased demand for the lots, and today it is the most desirable residence section of the city with its several thousand beautiful and costly homes.

On the 9th of April, 1889, application was made in the following form to have the town of Casper incorporated:

“APPLICATION FOR INCORPORATION

“Notice is hereby given that I will make application for the incorporation of the Town of Casper, before the board of county commissioners of Carbon county, at their regular May meeting, to be held at Rawlins, on the 6th day of May, A.D. 1889, or as soon thereafter as I can be heard. The said incorporation of the Town of Casper shall comprise two square miles, being bounded on the north by the line running east and west through the center of sections three, four and five; on the south by the line running east and west through the center of sections eight, nine and ten; and on the west by the line running north and south through the center of sections nine and ten; all in township thirty-three, north of range seventy-nine, west, comprising the following legal subdivisions, to-wit:

“The southwest quarter of section three, and the south half of section four, and the southeast quarter of section five, and the northeast quarter of section eight, and the north half of section nine, and the northwest quarter of section ten; all in township thirty-three, north of range seventy-nine, west of the sixth parallel meridian.

“(Signed) JOHN MERRITT, Applicant.

“Dated this 9th day of April, A. D. 1889.”

That the application of Mr. Merritt was favorably acted upon by the board of county commissioners of Carbon county is evident from the order made by that body which is as follows:

“ORDER

“Of the Board of County Commissioners of Carbon County, Wyoming.

“Petition for the incorporation of the town of Casper presented.

“The law having been fully complied with, governing the incorporation of towns, it is hereby ordered and declared that the following lands shall be incorporated as the town of Casper:

“The southwest quarter of section three.

“The south half of section four.

“The southeast quarter of section five.

“The northeast quarter of section eight.

“The north half of section nine.

“The northwest quarter of section ten.

“All in township thirty-three, north of range seventy-nine, west of the sixth parallel meridian, Carbon county, Wyoming Territory, and it is further ordered an election shall be held in and for the purpose of electing a town council and other officers as provided by law, and said election shall take place on the second Monday of July, A.D. 1889, viz., July 8th.

“John H. Adam, W. J. Van Leer and Robert White are hereby appointed inspectors of said election.”

As soon as the above order was received a meeting of a number of influential citizens was held, and a call for a mass meeting was made, which read:

“The electors of the village of Casper are called to meet at the Congregational Tabernacle on Saturday evening, July 6, 1889, to



A BUSY DAY IN THE "OLD TOWN" OF CASPER, 1888



FIRST STORE OF THE RICHARDS & CUNNINGHAM COMPANY, CORNER CENTER AND  
SECOND STREETS, CASPER, 1888



nominate candidates for village officers, to be voted on next Monday, July 8."

The election being held as per the above date, the following named citizens were elected: George Mitchell, mayor; Robert White, P. A. Demorest, A. McKinney and John Adam, councilmen.

One hundred fifteen votes were cast at this first election held in the village of Casper.

The first official act of the village board was the appointment of Joseph T. Graham, clerk; A. J. Cunningham, treasurer; Phil Watson, marshal; R. H. Wilbur, police judge; all of whom took the oath of office on Thursday evening, July 11, 1889. The town clerk was also the ex-officio assessor and his salary was fixed at \$50 per annum. The town marshal was also the fire warden and street commissioner and his salary was placed at \$75 per month. The town attorney's salary was \$125 per annum, and the town treasurer received two and one-half per cent of all the moneys covered into the treasury. The salary of the mayor was fixed at \$50 per annum and the members of the town council received \$40 per annum.

It was resolved that the regular meetings of the council should be held the first Monday of each month at 7 o'clock p. m. during the months of October, November, December, January, February, and March, and at 8 o'clock p. m. the other months in the year, and until otherwise directed the meetings of the council should be held in the office of the Wyoming Lumber company, "but if inconvenient, the meeting of the town council may be held at any other place in the town of Casper upon twelve hours' notice being given to each of the members of the council."

It was ordered and determined that the amount of the general tax for the current year, ending May 1, 1890, should be \$800.

The first meeting of the village board was held in the office of the Wyoming Lumber company on Wednesday, July 10, at eight o'clock in the evening, and after the officers above named were appointed, resolutions were adopted as follows:

"Resolved, That the members of this board act in good faith, without prejudice or partiality."

"Resolved, That inasmuch as the citizens of the town have seen fit to place us in the honorable and responsible position of the village board, for the now thriving village of Casper, we extend to them a vote of thanks."

The first offender to violate and feel the effects of the village ordinance entitled "An ordinance concerning the discharge of fire arms, bearing deadly weapons," etc., was arrested on Wednesday, July 17, 1889. The offender's name is of no importance, but he fired

off a pistol, and before the smoke had cleared away, Marshal Watson arrested him, took him before Police Judge R. H. Wilbur, and a fine of nine dollars and costs was imposed.

At a special meeting held July 30, 1889, Councilmen White and Adam were appointed a special committee to select a location for a jail building for the town of Casper, and after due deliberation the committee decided that the first public building for Casper should be located on the west end of lot 15 in block 8, and a contract was awarded to Robinson & Osborne to construct the jail building at a cost not to exceed \$313.95.

The street and alley committee at this same meeting was authorized to expend not to exceed \$200 for the improvement of streets and cross walks.

The annual appropriation for the year ending May 1, 1890, was for salaries of town officers, \$1,600; streets and alleys and cross walks, \$200; incidental expenses, \$200; and for a town hall, \$2,000; making the total annual appropriation \$4,000.

Chris Baysel was ordered to draw plans and specifications for a town hall and the specifications for the second and most important public building in the city were as follows: "Building to be 25 feet wide by 74 feet long, 12 inch wall, 16 foot ceiling, tin roof, galvanized iron cornice, four windows on each side, two large arch windows in front, double doors, arch transom over doors, wainscoting four feet high. Building to be plastered and painted in good workmanlike manner and not to cost more than two thousand dollars."

These specifications were not as specific as the contractors and architects now require, especially in the construction of a public building, and at a subsequent meeting of the town council, when the contractor presented a bill for extras, it will be seen that either the contractor or the town council did not get all that was coming to them. On April 21, 1890, Emanuel Erben was awarded the contract for the construction of the town hall at a cost of \$1,985. Brenning & McFarland were the next lowest bidders, their price being \$1,998.

The second election for town officers occurred on May 13, 1890. It was a bitter contest and W. E. Hawley received 72 votes for mayor and J. J. Hurt received 66. P. A. Demorest and O. K. Garvey were elected councilmen. The first meeting of the second council was a special which was held at 10:00 a. m. May 23, 1890. W. E. Hawley, mayor, and Robert White, P. A. Demorest, O. K. Garvey and A. McKinney, councilmen, were present. At this meeting P. A. Demorest was appointed to act as chairman of the council for the ensuing year in the absence of the mayor. Mayor Hawley was present at very few of the meetings of the council during the year.



At the first regular meeting of the second council, which was held at 7:30 in the evening of June 2, 1890, W. A. Denecke was appointed town treasurer; A. T. Butler, town attorney; R. H. Wilbur, police justice; Charles Crow, town marshal, and H. A. Lilly, town clerk. The first special and the first regular meetings of this council were held in the rooms of the Natrona county board of commissioners, which were located in the building over White & Company's saloon, but the third meeting, which was held on July 7, 1890, was in the new town hall, this being the first meeting held in the new public building. At this meeting the contractor put in a bill amounting to \$49.50 for extra labor and material on the town hall, but the claim was disputed. Two of the councilmen favored the payment of \$24.75, which was half the amount claimed for extras, but the other two councilmen were in favor of allowing the contractor nothing. The \$24.75 was finally allowed.

On October 8, 1890, C. E. Crow resigned as marshal of the town and William Hodge was appointed to fill the unexpired term.

At the meeting held on October 8, 1890, it was decided by resolution to rent the town hall for dances and theaters, the fee to be \$7.00 per night during the months of October, November, December, January, February, and March, and \$5.00 per night during the other months of the year. Religious organizations were given the use of the hall free on Sundays. At an adjourned meeting held on October 9, an ordinance was enacted providing for a fine of \$100 for any person convicted of gambling. There were numerous open gambling houses in the town then, and the \$100 paid each month was considered the same as a license. The gambling houses were never disturbed so long as they paid their fines each month.

Mayor Hawley was present at a special meeting held on October 17, 1890, this being the second meeting at which the mayor was present since his induction into office on May 23. Because of his continuous absence an ordinance was adopted on November 3, which provided "that if any member of the town council be absent from three consecutive regular meetings without a reasonable excuse his office shall be declared vacant." In commenting upon the continuous absence of the mayor which by this time had become a standing joke, one of the local newspapers said: "Casper enjoys the distinction of being a regularly organized and incorporated town—yet a town without a head. We've had no mayor during the past nine months; for, although a gentleman was elected to that position in the spring of 1890, he has ever since been a non-resident of the city and state, notwithstanding that in order to secure his election he pledged himself to invest in a house and maintain a residence in our midst."

At this same meeting it was recorded in the minutes that hereafter when reference was made to the county in which the town of Casper was located, the name of "Carbon" should be changed to "Natrona," and the name, "Territory of Wyoming" should be changed to the "State of Wyoming."

The appropriation bill passed April 17, 1891, for the maintenance of the town government for the coming year amounted to \$1,500. Thirteen hundred dollars was for officers' salaries, \$100 for streets and alleys, and \$100 for cemetery purposes.

The third town election occurred in May, 1891, and as before, there was a bitter contest between the republican and democratic nominees. Alexander McKinney was the republican nominee for mayor and he received 69 votes, while Peter C. Nicolaysen was the democratic aspirant, and he received 64 votes. The vote on councilmen was: George Mitchell, 77; R. A. Parks, 38; H. L. Patton, 70; E. N. Winslow, 68. At this election the vote on bonds to provide Casper with a system of water works was 51 for the bonds and 34 against.

The third council was Alexander McKinney, mayor; George Mitchell, Hugh L. Patton, O. K. Garvey and Peter A. Demorest, councilmen. At the first meeting of this council, held June 1, 1891, Lew Seely was appointed marshal; W. A. Denecke, treasurer; E. J. Carpenter, clerk; A. T. Butler, town attorney; and R. H. Wilbur, police justice. At the meeting held August 6, Wilbur resigned as police justice, and Granville E. Butler was appointed to fill the unexpired term.

Nothing of importance except routine business was transacted in the council meetings, although the council met regularly each month. At the meeting held on November 4, Councilmen Patton and Mitchell were appointed a committee to select a jail and make a contract for the care and keep of town prisoners.<sup>1</sup> There being no funds with which to build a jail, the committee recommended that the town prisoners be taken to the Converse county jail in Douglas for their care and keep, and the council at a subsequent meeting concurred in the recommendation and all town prisoners were taken to Douglas to serve their sentences or await trial.

Lew Seely resigned the position of town marshal on June 10, 1891, and Tom McGrath was appointed to fill the office during the unexpired term. At this same meeting a wooden pump was ordered to be placed in the town well. The town well was about mid-way on Center street between Second street and Midwest avenue, on the

<sup>1</sup> The town jail was burned by Dr. Joseph Benson October 11, 1891, who set fire to it while incarcerated, and who was burned to death.

west side of the street. The water from this well was used by the general public and for domestic purposes. Water was also hauled from the Platte river and Garden creek in barrels and sold to the saloons for "chasers." Some people also used it to drink.

An ordinance was enacted on March 27, 1892, placing the license to sell liquor at \$200 per annum. There were from six to eight saloons in the town those days, and the town received a revenue of from twelve to sixteen hundred dollars per annum, which went a long ways toward the maintenance of the town government.

Tom McGrath resigned as town marshal on April 8, 1892, and H. A. Bell was appointed to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term. The position of town marshal, together with its multitudinous duties, consisting of water and street commissioner and fire warden, and the small amount of salary attached to the offices, did not appeal to men after the novelty of wearing a large silver star had worn off.

At the last meeting of this council the appropriation for the ensuing year was made, which allowed \$1,800 for the salaries of town officers; \$250 for cemetery; \$500 for the maintenance of streets and crossings, and \$1,000 for fire protection, making a total of \$3,500.

Credit must be given the men who had charge of the town affairs in the early days for at least being economical. Three thousand five hundred dollars to pay the expense of a town of 400 population for one year would seem almost impossible in this day of liberality in the expenditure of public funds.

Party lines were closely drawn in the early days of Casper in the school, town and county elections, and in 1892 republican and democratic tickets were again placed in the field for town officers, which resulted in the election of Charles K. Bucknum as mayor. He received 71 votes. His opponent, Peter A. Demorest, received 52 votes. John McClure and John McGrath defeated J. P. Smith and W. A. Denecke for the council. This was the fourth town council, which consisted of C. K. Bucknum, mayor; H. L. Patton, George Mitchell, John McGrath and John McClure, councilmen.

At a meeting of this council held on August 1, 1892, W. T. Evans was awarded the contract for the building of the union town and county jail. The price to be paid for the erection of the building, not including the vault and foundation, was \$2,335.18. The building was constructed in the middle of the block on the west side of David street, between Second street and Midwest avenue. It stood immediately in the rear of the new fire hall and municipal garage, but was torn down late in the year 1921. At the same meeting H. A. Bell resigned as marshal and Frank Berg was appointed. Andrew J. Irwin was appointed justice of the peace at a meeting held January 4, 1893.

At the meeting of the council held on April 13, 1892, it was ordered that the water bonds of \$5,000 be sold. These were the bonds for the construction of a water system for the town which were voted at the election held in May, 1891, and which were carried by a vote of 51 to 34.

On March 8, 1893, the town council ordered one more well dug to supply the residents with water. This well was to be five feet square inside, curbed with two-inch lumber to the water. Below the water the well was to be curbed with brick. The well was to have four feet of water in it the year 'round. John Irwin was awarded the contract for digging the well and he was to receive \$4.00 per foot for his work.

Election time rolled around once more and the usual political contest was waged. The republican party was slightly in the majority and C. K. Bucknum was elected mayor, his vote being 92. J. J. Hurt received 59 votes. For councilmen, H. A. Lilly received 89 votes; Peter O'Malley, 93; Robert White, 48; and P. C. Nicolaysen, 69. The fifth town council was composed of C. K. Bucknum, mayor, and H. A. Lilly, John McClure, John McGrath and Peter O'Malley, councilmen. John Merritt was appointed marshal; W. A. Denecke, treasurer; A. T. Butler, attorney; E. J. Carpenter, Jr., clerk; W. S. Irwin, sexton; E. J. Carpenter, Sr., police magistrate.

An ordinance was passed June 10, 1893, providing for the purchase of land for cemetery and park purposes, and \$250 was appropriated for the payment of final proof on the north half of the southwest quarter, south half of the northeast quarter of section 10, township 33 north, range 79 west. The north ten acres was surveyed and platted, and the bodies which had been interred in the temporary cemetery were disinterred and moved to the new cemetery. The temporary cemetery was northwest of where the Chicago & Northwestern Railway stockyards are now located.

The name of Grover Cleveland, as president of the United States, signed by his secretary, is on the patent issued to the town of Casper for the land described above.

The budget for 1893-4 provided \$1,600 for officers' salaries; \$400 for cemetery fund; \$500 for streets and crossings; making a sum total of \$2,500 with which to carry on the business of the town.

The \$5,000 bonds with which to provide a water system for the town were deemed inadequate and as there were irregularities at the election all former action in the matter was rescinded on September 24, 1893, and a special election was called for October 10, 1893, to vote for \$30,000 bonds with which to provide a water system. The subject is fully covered in this volume under the heading of "Casper's Water Supply."

The appropriation made on April 2, 1894, for current expenses was: Officers' salaries, \$1,800; streets and crossings, \$500; fire protection, \$1,000; general fund, \$3,500, and a general tax for the year was made of \$1,000. The assessed valuation of the town at this time was \$214,909.26.

The next election occurred on May 8, 1894. Joel J. Hurt was elected mayor by a vote of 138, against C. K. Bucknum, who received 95 votes. P. C. Nicolaysen and John McGrath were elected councilmen over Lew Seely and J. S. Warner by about the same vote as was cast for mayor. H. A. Lilly and Peter O'Malley were the hold-over councilmen. At the first meeting of the new council W. S. Kimball was appointed treasurer; W. S. Irwin, clerk; Frank Berg, marshal; J. K. Calkins, police magistrate; John Cosgrove, sexton; George Walker, attorney.

J. K. Calkins resigned as police magistrate December 3, and E. A. Johnson and Joseph Ford were nominated to fill the position. Each of the candidates received two votes and as the mayor was not present there was a deadlock and the town was without a police judge until February 4, when Ford was appointed.

George B. McCalmont was elected mayor on May 9, 1895, without opposition. John S. Warner and W. A. Denecke were elected councilmen over W. D. Rhoades and James A. Bailey. P. C. Nicolaysen and John McGrath were the hold-overs. The new council appointed F. W. Okie, clerk; George Walker, attorney; Walter B. Nichols, marshal; R. F. Milford, sexton; Oscar Hiestand, treasurer, and Joseph Ford, police justice.

The mayor and councilmen at a regular meeting on September 2, 1895, appropriated their salary as town officers for the remainder of their term into the water works fund. F. W. Okie resigned as town clerk November 18, and Lee Culver was appointed to fill out the term, but Culver resigned on December 14 and M. P. Wheeler was appointed to fill the vacancy.

An ordinance was enacted January 21, 1896, creating the office of town physician, and Dr. J. F. Leeper was appointed to the new office.

Many children in Casper died during the months of December, 1895, and January, 1896, from diphtheria and on January 30 the board of directors of school district Number 2 closed the public schools to prevent the spread of the disease, and to co-operate with the school board, the town council ordered that all public gatherings be prohibited until permission was granted by the council. All the children in the town were ordered to be kept at home and the town marshal was ordered to notify the ministers and other persons at the



head of the various societies to hold no meetings. The fathers and mothers and all citizens were requested to co-operate with the town council in keeping the disease from spreading. The town was rigidly quarantined. Panic prevailed in nearly every family in the town and all the mothers who could, left town with their children, hoping to avoid the dreaded disease.

Dr. J. F. Leeper, the town physician, who was appointed by the town council to check the spread of the disease, caused the arrest of Dr. J. L. Garner on the grounds that Garner was attending a case of diphtheria and claimed that it was some other disease. Town attorney George Walker prosecuted the case and Chester B. Bradley was attorney for the defense. A jury brought in a verdict of acquittal for the defendant.

The disease was finally stamped out and on March 2 the quarantine was raised and annulled. School was resumed, the churches held their regular meetings and public gatherings were held as usual. The mothers who had left town with their children returned one by one, but it was early summer before the scare was entirely over.

The annual appropriation bill was considerably increased this year on account of the building of the water works. Two thousand dollars was appropriated for salaries of the town officers; \$500 for streets and alleys; \$1,500 for general fund purposes; and \$7,500 for water works debt and interest on bonds.

There was no contest in the town election in May, 1896, this being the first time there was but one ticket in the field since the town was incorporated. George B. McCalmont, republican, was re-elected mayor, and John McGrath and P. C. Nicolaysen, democratic, were re-elected on the council. John S. Warner and W. A. Denecke, republicans, were the hold-overs. The same officers were appointed as in 1895. The leaders of the two political parties had gotten together and agreed that on account of the water works system being put in there should be no contest. But little business was transacted this year except to install the water works system and adopt ordinances concerning it.

In May, 1897, occurred one of the most closely contested town elections that had yet been held. Patrick Sullivan, republican, received 131 votes for mayor against James P. Smith whose vote was 122; for the council Dave Graham, republican, received 130 votes, and Robert White, democratic, received 133; J. J. Svendsen, democratic, 105, and S. W. Conwell, republican, 128. John McGrath and P. C. Nicolaysen were the hold-overs. The officers appointed were A. E. Case, clerk; Oscar Hiestand, treasurer; J. C. Randall, sexton; H. A. Lilly, police judge; J. L. Garner, physician; J. L. Barnett,





TWO VIEWS OF CASPER IN 1894



marshal. A. E. Case resigned as clerk on November 2 and E. B. Shaffner was appointed to fill out the term.

In 1898 there was no contest in the town election and Patrick Sullivan was re-elected mayor with the same councilmen as the previous year. The same officers were appointed except that Dr. Leeper was made town physician, F. H. Sawyer, police judge, and Charles Atmore, oil inspector.

In 1899 W. S. Kimball was elected mayor over Frank Wood by a vote of 143 to 134; for the council J. V. Cantlin and J. W. Bowie were elected over P. C. Hays and J. J. Svendsen. P. C. Nicolaysen and John McGrath were the hold-overs. The same officers were appointed except that Frank Jameson was appointed police magistrate.

In 1900, P. C. Nicolaysen was elected mayor and C. K. Bucknum and Frank Wood were the new councilmen. J. V. Cantlin was the hold-over, and C. H. Townsend was appointed in the place of J. H. Bowie, who resigned. Alex T. Butler was appointed attorney; J. A. Sheffner, marshal; E. P. Rohrbaugh, physician; J. M. Hammon, sexton. The other officers were the same as the previous year.

James V. Cantlin was elected mayor in 1901 and J. E. Schulte and J. S. Van Doren were elected to the council. Frank Wood and C. K. Bucknum were the hold-overs. Percy Shallenberger was the new clerk; John McGrath, treasurer; W. S. Kimball, oil inspector; Robert McAdam, marshal; F. D. Hammond, attorney. Percy Shallenberger resigned as clerk August 7 and P. C. Hays was appointed to serve the unexpired term. At this same meeting it was deemed necessary to have a night marshal and J. A. Cumming was appointed.

In 1902 C. K. Bucknum was elected mayor, and L. C. Seely and C. C. P. Webel were the new councilmen. J. S. Van Doren and J. E. Schulte were the hold-overs. E. D. Norton was appointed attorney; A. T. Philips, clerk; J. A. Sheffner, marshal, and the other officers were the same as the previous year.

W. S. Kimball was elected mayor in 1903, with W. W. Wilson and John Curran as councilmen. C. C. P. Webel and L. C. Seely were the hold-overs. The appointive officers were the same as the previous year, except that F. Salathe was the oil inspector. At this election, which was held on May 12, an issue of sewer bonds amounting to \$14,500 was voted upon. The establishment of a sewer system for the town had been proposed and advocated by the Casper Chamber of Commerce, but at the election there was a very active opposition to the proposition and the result was 104 votes for and 94 votes against the bonds.

W. S. Kimball was again elected mayor in 1904, with W. A. Ford and C. C. P. Webel as councilmen for two years and Enoch Cornell as

councilman for one year. Mr. Webel's name was on two tickets and he received 210 votes. When the canvassing board canvassed the returns, it was declared that D. A. Robertson, who received 138 votes, should receive the certificate of election because the law provided that one name should appear on no more than one ticket. But the action of the canvassing board was revoked by Judge Charles E. Carpenter, who issued a peremptory writ of mandamus against the mayor and members of the town council and ordered the council to assemble before 5 o'clock on June 13, 1904, and set aside the decision of the canvassing board and declare the men elected who received the highest number of votes.

The table on the opposite page contains a list of the elective and appointive officers for the town (now city) of Casper during the year 1904 and each succeeding year up to and including 1923.

Upon an affidavit from the mayor to the effect that the town of Casper contained a population of more than 4,000, the governor of the state by proclamation on January 9, 1917, declared Casper to be a city of the first class. The elections for mayor and councilmen thereafter were held in November instead of being held in May, as heretofore, and the mayor and councilmen were elected for two years, instead of the councilmen being elected for four years, as heretofore. The mayor and councilmen that year, whose terms of office should have expired in June, 1917, held office until the first of January, 1918, by reason of the change being made from a city of the second class to first class.

#### CHURCHES OF CASPER

Rev. Bross of Chadron, Nebraska, was the first ordained minister who conducted religious services in the town of Casper, and the date of the first service was Tuesday evening, March 3, 1889. The "meeting" was held in the office of the Graham house, then located on the southwest corner of Center street and First street (now Midwest avenue). Services were conducted in the office of this hotel during the summer of '89 as often as any minister of any denomination could spare the time and undergo the inconvenience of coming to this frontier town. The congregation was made up of business men, professional men, saloon keepers, bartenders, gamblers, cowboys, mining men, and the few women and children who lived here at the time. That the services were highly appreciated may be judged from the newspaper notice of the first meeting which was published in the *Casper Weekly Mail*, of which the following is a copy:

"Rev. Bross of Chadron preached at the Graham house last Tuesday evening according to appointment. Quite a large crowd was in attendance and listened to a very interesting and instructive sermon. Mr. Bross will preach again in four weeks, and

	1904	1905	1906	1907
Mayor.....	W. S. Kimball	W. S. Kimball	W. S. Kimball	W. S. Kimball
Councilmen.....	W. W. Wilson John Curran W. A. Ford E. Cornell	W. A. Ford E. Cornell H. G. Duhling Frank Wood	Harry G. Duhling Frank Wood W. A. Ford C. C. P. Webel	W. A. Ford C. C. P. Webel Oscar Hiestand Frank Wood
Clerk.....	A. T. Phillips	M. P. Wheeler	M. P. Wheeler	M. P. Wheeler
Treasurer.....	John McGrath	John McGrath	J. S. Van Doren	J. S. Van Doren
Marshal.....	J. A. Sheffner	J. A. Sheffner	J. A. Sheffner	Wm. Jones
Attorney.....	E. D. Norton	F. D. Hammond	F. D. Hammond	F. D. Hammond
Police Judge.....	Frank Jameson	W. E. Tubbs	W. E. Tubbs	W. E. Tubbs
Physician.....	E. P. Rohrbaugh	E. P. Rohrbaugh	E. P. Rohrbaugh	E. P. Rohrbaugh
Water Comm'r.....	J. V. Cantlin			
Street Sup'v'r.....	J. V. Cantlin	Wm. Jones	John Keil	John Keil
Oil Inspector.....	Dr. F. Salathe	Dr. F. Salathe	Dr. F. Salathe	Dr. F. Salathe
Sexton.....	W. I. Ogburn	J. M. Hammon	J. M. Hammon	J. M. Hammon
	1908	1909	1910	1911*
Mayor.....	W. S. Kimball	W. S. Kimball	W. S. Kimball	W. S. Kimball
Councilmen.....	Oscar Hiestand Frank Wood T. A. Dean W. A. Ford	T. A. Dean W. A. Ford David Kidd G. T. Morgan	David Kidd G. T. Morgan W. A. Ford Frank Wood	W. A. Ford Frank Wood G. T. Morgan David Kidd
Clerk.....	M. P. Wheeler	M. P. Wheeler	M. P. Wheeler	M. P. Wheeler
Treasurer.....	E. P. Palmer	E. P. Palmer	Ed. C. Wilson	Ed. C. Wilson
Marshal.....	O. M. Rice	Wm. Jones	Wm. Jones	Wm. Jones
Attorney.....	W. O. Wilson	W. O. Wilson	W. O. Wilson	W. O. Wilson
Police Judge.....	W. E. Tubbs	W. E. Tubbs	W. E. Tubbs	W. E. Tubbs
Physician.....	M. C. Keith	M. C. Keith	M. C. Keith	M. C. Keith
Street Sup'v'r.....	Wm. Jones	Jake Nelson	John Keil	H. L. Cilly
Oil Inspector.....	Dr. Kahn	A. T. Phillips	A. T. Phillips	
Sexton.....	C. A. Ewing	C. A. Ewing	C. A. Ewing	C. A. Ewing
	1913	1915	1918†	1919
Mayor.....	E. P. Rohrbaugh	E. P. Rohrbaugh	John F. Leeper	John F. Leeper
Councilmen.....	G. T. Morgan Frank Wood Hiram Lewis David Kidd	Hiram Lewis David Kidd Samuel Switzer Geo. B. Nelson	Fay Crater M. J. Gothberg H. C. Bretschneider T. A. Dean	T. A. Dean Wm. Kocher Perry A. Morris W. F. Dunn
Clerk.....	W. R. Johnson <sup>1</sup>	C. M. Bryan	Wm. Kocher	M. L. Bishop
Treasurer.....	Wilbur Foshay	Wilbur Foshay	Perry Morris	W. W. Keefe
Marshal.....	Wm. Jones	Pat Royce	Anna Dougherty <sup>2</sup>	C. M. Bryan <sup>5</sup>
Attorney.....	W. O. Wilson	W. O. Wilson	E. M. Ellithorpe <sup>3</sup>	C. M. Bryan <sup>5</sup>
Police Judge.....	R. H. Nichols	W. E. Tubbs	Frank J. Wolf <sup>4</sup>	E. W. Davis
Physician.....	M. C. Keith	W. E. Tubbs	W. H. Patten	John McGrath <sup>6</sup>
Water Comm'r.....	Jacob Nelson	M. C. Keith	W. E. Tubbs	W. H. Patten
Street Sup'v'r.....	J. F. Stanley	J. E. Frisby	J. C. Kamp	W. E. Tubbs
Sexton.....	F. B. Hathaway		Wm. Jones	J. C. Kamp
Engineer.....	B. B. Lummis <sup>9</sup>	E. W. Farrell	E. S. Baker	Wm. Jones
Fire Chief.....		M. N. Wheeler	L. S. Worthington	
	1920	1921	1922	1923
Mayor.....	B. H. Pelton	B. H. Pelton	W. A. Blackmore	W. A. Blackmore
Councilmen.....	Earl C. Boyle Fred Van Gorden C. M. Bryan W. W. Keefe	Earl C. Boyle Fred Van Gorden C. M. Bryan W. W. Keefe	W. W. Keefe J. M. Whisenhunt J. J. Giblin	J. M. Whisenhunt J. M. Whisenhunt John G. Jones
Clerk.....	W. F. Dunn	J. J. Giblin	John G. Jones	John J. Hancock
Treasurer.....	M. L. Bishop	J. M. Whisenhunt	John J. Hancock	John S. Pettingill
Marshal.....	Asa F. Sloane	J. M. Whisenhunt	John S. Pettingill	Sylvester F. Pelton
Treasurer.....	J. S. Van Doren	J. S. Van Doren	H. H. Price	Walter W. Royce
Marshal.....	E. M. Ellithorpe <sup>7</sup>	J. E. Lynch <sup>8</sup>	John S. Pettingill	H. H. Price
Attorney.....	R. M. Boeke	R. M. Boeke	H. H. Price	J. S. Van Doren
Police Judge.....	P. A. Morris	P. A. Morris	Alexander Nisbet	Alexander Nisbet
Physician.....	G. S. Bawden	G. S. Bawden	R. M. Boeke <sup>12</sup>	R. N. Ogden
Water Comm'r.....	Wm. Jones	Wm. Jones	P. A. Morris <sup>10</sup>	John A. Murray
Street Sup'v'r.....	O. Freel	O. Freel	Walter Storrie <sup>11</sup>	W. H. Johnson
Sexton.....	Chas. Lundman	Chas. Lundman	K. S. Myrland	K. S. Myrland
Engineer.....	F. S. Knittle	F. S. Knittle	O. L. Thompson	O. L. Thompson
Fire Chief.....	Oscar Hiestand	Oscar Hiestand	F. S. Knittle	F. S. Knittle
			Oscar Hiestand	Oscar Hiestand

<sup>1</sup> Resigned; C. M. Bryan appointed. <sup>2</sup> Resigned June 6; C. M. Bryan appointed. <sup>3</sup> Resigned; E. W. Davis appointed. <sup>4</sup> Resigned December 31; John McGrath appointed. <sup>5</sup> Resigned May 1; Asa F. Sloane appointed. <sup>6</sup> Resigned July 1; Fred E. Place appointed; resigned July 9th; Frank K. Webb appointed. <sup>7</sup> Resigned; J. E. Lynch appointed. <sup>8</sup> Resigned; J. A. Sheffner appointed. <sup>9</sup> Mayor assumed office on June 1, 1911, for two years; councilmen for four years. <sup>†</sup> City made first-class by proclamation of governor on January 9, 1917; mayor elected for two years, councilmen for two years; elections in November. S. Wiley served as park commissioner in 1909; Frank Julian was appointed in 1921 and 1922. <sup>9</sup> Resigned October, 1913; M. N. Wheeler appointed. M. N. Wheeler served as city engineer from January, 1911, until June, 1913. C. R. Bodenbach served as dairy and food inspector during 1921 and until August, 1922; resigned, and G. R. Dafoe was appointed. <sup>10</sup> Resigned June, 1922; John A. Murray appointed. <sup>11</sup> Resigned September 15, 1922; W. H. Johnson appointed. <sup>12</sup> Resigned October 15; R. N. Ogden appointed December 4th.

talks strongly of building a church. That we are in need of a neat and suitable edifice of this kind seems a fact too evident to be questioned. It would add to the value of all property in the village. Every new building put up, every improvement made in the town raises the value of our own property; hence anyone is always welcomed to the town who will build him a house and otherwise improve and beautify his grounds. He not only increases his own comfort but is a public benefactor, for in doing thus he increases the value of all property in his locality. If this is true of private and personal property, how much more so is it of a public building like a church, in which the whole town having contributed toward, are interested. Again, it would be the means of calling into our town a good class of citizens. Nothing has so much weight in attracting the desirable class of people to a place as its public institutions. Without them the air of solidity is entirely lost. A large per cent of the money used would naturally be expended here. It is understood that the church at large is willing to give some assistance, providing the community subscribe enough to warrant bestowment of such a gift. This amount would also be expended in our midst. There are also many other reasons why we should go forward with this work. While there are but a few of our male adult population that are ordinarily supposed to have souls (worth speaking of) to save, there are women and children about us to whom this spiritual privilege should be freely extended, and it will simply prove a criticism upon the enterprising and progressive spirit of the citizens of Casper if the matter of building a suitable place in which to hold divine service shall be overlooked during spring improvement."

It is evident that the above editorial brought forth fruit, for the Congregational Tabernacle was built in the early summer of 1889. This was the first church building to be erected in the town of Casper. Rev. H. G. Russell arrived in Casper on May 10 of that year, and after assisting in the building of the Tabernacle, he was minister in charge for several months. Rev. H. A. Macomber succeeded Rev. Russell. The building was located on the southeast corner of Wolcott street and Third (now First street) on the lot where the New York Oil company's main offices are located. The building was also used for a school house. It was not a very pretentious structure, as may be judged from the photograph herewith reproduced. The people of the town were ambitious, however, and on June 15, 1890, Rev. G. I. Powell of Chadron and the citizens of Casper made an agreement to the effect that the Congregational society would contribute \$500 and lend the local church society another \$500, while the people in general of the town were requested to donate any amount they felt disposed for the purpose of building a church that would be a credit to the society as well as the town. A supper and dance were given on the 4th of July by the ladies, and ninety-one dollars and eighty cents was cleared, which was to be placed to the credit of the new church fund. The church was not built, however, on account of insufficient funds, and we find the Congregationalists and the other denominations holding their services in the new town hall in the fall of 1890. The building and the lot owned by the Congregational society was sold to private parties who used it for a residence.

In June, 1890, Bishop Talbot of the Episcopal denomination was quite active in the matter of raising funds with which to build a





CONGREGATIONAL TABERNACLE, CASPER'S FIRST CHURCH BUILDING  
This building was also used as a school house and town hall in 1889-90



BUSINESS HOUSES ON WEST CENTER STREET, SOUTH OF ALLEY, BETWEEN SECOND  
STREET AND MIDWEST AVENUE, 1892



church in Casper and he offered to donate \$500 in cash, and lend the organization another \$500 at six per cent interest, if the citizens of the town would subscribe an additional \$500 within ten days. A subscription paper was circulated, but the entire amount was not raised in the time specified and the matter dragged along for several months. It was November before the \$500 was raised by the citizens which was to be added to the \$1,000 donated by the Episcopalians for the building of the church for that denomination. Archdeacon John E. Sulger of Laramie, who made a special trip to Casper, succeeded in arousing enough interest in the matter to have the required amount subscribed. When this amount was raised by the Episcopalians, interest in the Congregational church waned and finally died. Work was commenced on the new Episcopal church the first of January, 1891, and the building was finished during the summer of that year. The church was erected on the northeast corner of Wolcott and Second streets, where the Midwest Refining company building is now situated. Rev. F. H. Argo was the first minister, and he remained until 1894. On Friday, April 27, 1894, Rev. and Mrs. John Wilson, with their three children arrived in Casper from Portadown, Armagh county, Ireland, and the following Sunday Rev. Wilson preached his initial sermon. Rev. Wilson and his family remained in Casper until July, 1897, when they returned to Ireland. Rev. Wilson was a man of most excellent qualities, and was admired by all the citizens of Casper, which was then what was termed a wild, typical frontier town. The membership of his church was very small and the salary the minister received was scarcely enough to sustain one person, and it is said that had it not been for some very good friends, but who were not members of the church, who knew of his condition and had sent to him trout and sage chickens in the summer time and antelope and deer during the winter months that he and his family, no doubt would many times have found their cupboard bare. He accepted the conditions without a complaint or murmur; and worked for the upbuilding of the church and the uplifting of the people in the community with the same energy and same spirit as though he was receiving a princely salary. Rev. James L. Craig succeeded Rev. Wilson, coming to Casper early in the year of 1898. Rev. Craig remained for ten years, and in 1908 resigned and went to Anaconda, Montana. Rev. McCullogh succeeded Rev. Craig, but he remained only a short time. Rev. J. C. Villiers succeeded Rev. McCullogh, and he remained until October, 1913, when he responded to a call in Honolulu, in the Hawaiian Islands. Rev. R. B. W. Hutt succeeded Rev. Villiers and he was in charge from early in the year 1914 until the summer of 1918, when he enlisted in the world war as a

soldier. Under Rev. Hutt's administration the mission became a self-supporting parish. No regular services were held for several months after Rev. Hutt's departure, but on February 16, 1919, Rev. Philip K. Edwards of McAlester, Oklahoma, became the rector in charge. The little frame church building, constructed in 1891, was moved to the rear of the lot in 1906, and a new brick church building was erected on the site, the brick building being finished in the late summer of 1907, the dedication services being held on Thanksgiving day, November 27, 1907, Rev. G. C. Rafter of Cheyenne occupying the pulpit at the morning service, and Rev. S. Coolidge of Denver preached at the evening service. Services were held in this building until June, 1920, but on account of the four lots owned by the church organization having been sold for \$75,000, the church building was torn down, and the original frame structure was moved to the corner of Seventh and Wolcott streets, where it was remodelled and is being used for services until a new and commodious building is erected. Among the original members of this church were A. J. Cunningham, P. C. Nicolaysen, W. T. Evans and W. S. Kimball, all of whom are now vestrymen of the church organization. In connection with this church it is of interest to note that in 1918 Miss Josephine Collins, a sister of Lieutenant Caspar W. Collins, who was killed by the Indians at Platte Bridge station on July 26, 1865, left a legacy of \$100 which she requested to be used for the purchase of a permanent memorial in her brother's memory, and the vestrymen very wisely decided upon the purchase of a handsome gold and silver communion set, a chalice and paten, which is now the highly-prized property of the church organization.

In the early spring of 1893, sufficient money was raised for the building of the First Methodist Episcopal church in the town of Casper, on the northeast corner of Durbin and Second streets. The building was completed about the middle of August that year. Rev. R. J. Devenport, who was located in Douglas, was appointed minister in charge in June and assisted in the construction of the building. The church was dedicated in November by Rev. N. A. Chamberlain, D. D. The first board of trustees consisted of Messrs. A. J. Irwin, Marvin L. Bishop, John S. Burley, Louis Lindberg, and R. A. Ball. The pioneer stewards were John S. Burley, Mrs. Zenetta Ball, Mrs. Viola Irwin, and Mrs. S. A. Irwin. The first class leader was R. A. Ball, who was appointed December 26, 1893. Robert F. Milford was the first Sunday school superintendent, the election being January 3, 1894. The first president of the Ladies' Aid society was Mrs. S. A. Irwin. The Ladies' Dorcas society, the successor of the Aid society, chose and elected Mrs. Maggie S. Devenport its first president.

Rev. R. J. Devenport was granted leave in December, 1893, to relinquish his pastoral charge and went to take charge of a church enterprise in Manville. He was succeeded by Rev. William E. Ferguson, of Brooklyn, New York. On the first of April, 1894, Rev. Ferguson died of pneumonia and Rev. R. A. Ball took charge until the annual conference, when he was succeeded by Rev. H. A. Toland, in September, 1894. He remained for two years and three months, and in December, 1896, was succeeded by Rev. Clinton D. Day. At this time there were twenty-two members of the church. Rev. J. H. Gillespie of Newcastle succeeded Rev. Day in September, 1897. He remained in charge until April, 1901, when Rev. Josiah Martin of Kansas came to take charge and remained until June, 1903. Rev. E. J. Robinson was appointed pastor in August, 1903, and remained one year. In August, 1904, Rev. L. C. Thompson became the pastor and remained until August 31, 1908. During his pastorate the present church building was erected. It was started in 1906 but was not dedicated until the fall of 1907, when the annual conference was held at Casper. Bishop H. W. Warren dedicated the new building. The next pastor was Rev. J. J. Hicks, who took up his duties in September, 1908, and remained until September, 1910. He was succeeded by the Rev. Ira W. Kingsley, who had a successful pastorate for three years, when he was transferred to a larger field at Sheridan. About this time Casper began to grow, and naturally the churches took on new life and larger membership. Rev. J. M. Dickey became pastor on September 6, 1913, and remained two years, when he was succeeded by Rev. John J. Giblin. In the fall of 1918, Mr. Giblin volunteered for Y. M. C. A. work in the war and in September, 1918, Rev. Walter L. French from the South Kansas conference was appointed pastor of the church and under his pastorate of three years the membership of the church grew to about 500. During his pastorate a new parsonage was bought at the corner of Lincoln avenue and Devine streets and a new church site was bought in July, 1921, at the corner of South Center and Eighth streets, where a new church building is to be erected. In September, 1921, Rev. Lewis E. Carter, formerly of Troy conference, New York state, was transferred from Laramie and took up his duties. The First Methodist Episcopal is the second oldest church organization in Casper and the ministers in charge and the membership experienced about the same vicissitudes as well as the splendid success as were experienced by those connected with St. Mark's Episcopal church.

Father Nugent of Cheyenne was the first priest to come to Casper to hold Catholic services. He visited here in 1890 and remained but one day. While here, Father Nugent baptized Eugene Dunn, who

was the first Catholic child baptized in Casper. During the years 1895-6 Father Brofie of Chadron, Nebraska, made occasional visits here, and in 1897 Father Ahern, also of Chadron, made regular visits to the town. Mass was celebrated at different places, sometimes in private homes, occasionally in the town hall, and once in the Episcopal church. During the year of 1897 subscriptions were taken up from the Catholic members which were applied to the building fund and in the late fall a bazaar was given at which a handsome amount of money was raised which was also applied to the fund for the new church building. The committee who solicited the funds and aroused interest in the bazaar were Mrs. John Trevett, Mrs. J. P. Smith, Mrs. W. F. Dunn, Mrs. Jeremiah Mahoney, and Mrs. Oscar Hiestand. Bishop Lenahan visited Casper at that time, and approved the plan of a permanent church and appointed a building committee. Father James A. Keating was the first resident pastor of the Catholic church to be located in Casper. He came in 1898, and shortly after his arrival a contract was made with John M. Trevett for the erection of a church building to cost \$1,650. The new church was built on the southeast corner of First and Center streets, opposite where the Henning hotel now stands. Regarding this new church, one of the local newspapers said: "On Tuesday, March 15, Father Keating raised the first spade of dirt for the foundation of the new St. Anthony's Catholic church on the southeast corner of Center and Third (now First) streets. The site is one of the best in the city, and now since the church is to be there, this part of Casper will certainly build up, for when finished St. Anthony's church will be the finest in Central Wyoming. It will be a frame building, 30x46 feet in the body of the church, with a sanctuary 10x12 feet, a sacristy or vestry room adjacent. A tower will be added later on, elegant windows will be put in, beautiful altars erected and equipped with handsome pews. The plans for the edifice are rich in design, artistic and substantial. It has been the dream of Father Keating since he came among us to see a handsome church in Casper. Now that his wishes are being realized he is certainly happy. He entered upon his duties with enthusiasm and deserves great credit for the efforts manifested. The new church becomes a subject of interest for all the citizens of Casper, both Protestants as well as Catholics, and when completed will reflect praise for the push, energy, and progressive spirit shown by the citizens of the town." Father Keating left Casper in 1900, and Father Bryant was appointed in 1901 as the resident pastor with Douglas, Wheatland, Glendo, Glenrock and Sunrise as his missions. During Father Bryant's stay here, he succeeded in having a pastoral residence built on the same lot with the church which at that time was one of the





ST. MARK'S FIRST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, CORNER SECOND AND WOLCOTT STREETS.  
BUILT IN 1890



#### CASPER CHURCHES IN THE EARLY DAYS

*Left:* First Methodist Episcopal, Erected in 1893 and Rebuilt in 1906. *Right:* St. Mark's Episcopal, Built in 1890. *Center:* St. Anthony's Catholic, Built in 1898



nicest homes in the town. In August, 1915, Father Bryant was succeeded by Father James McGee. Father McGee died in November of the same year, and Father Isidore of Douglas was appointed temporary pastor and remained until December 18, when Rev. John H. Mullen was transferred from Newcastle to take charge of the church. Father Mullen recognized the growing demand for a new and more commodious church building and in December, 1916, the lot on the corner of Center and First streets and the parsonage were sold for \$22,500. The old church building was moved to the corner of Wolcott and Seventh streets, where services were held until the splendid new church building was finished. The new church, which cost about \$100,000, is located on the northwest corner of Center and Seventh streets, and is one of the nicest church buildings in the state. It was dedicated August 15, 1920, the ceremonies being attended by many Catholic priests and high officials of the Catholic church.

On April 28, 1909, Rev. George L. White, then Baptist missionary for Utah and Wyoming, organized the Baptist society of Casper, with a total membership of eight. On the 9th of September, 1909, Mr. W. R. Howell came to Casper to look after the Baptist work until a permanent pastor could be secured. He remained in the city until November 1, 1909. November 28, 1909, Rev. E. P. Hoyt of Manhattan, Montana, took up the work of the church, but remained as pastor for only a short time. One February 25, 1910, Mr. Hoyt died in a hospital in Omaha. July 6, 1910, Rev. R. R. Hopton of Danville, Iowa, accepted the call and under his ministry a neat little frame building on the corner of Fifth and Beech streets was put up. November 20, 1910, the first services were held in the first building the Baptists in Casper owned. Rev. Hopton closed his work with the Casper church September 20, 1914. January 3, 1915, Rev. Arthur J. Hanson assumed the duties as pastor of the church and remained until February 18, 1918. He gave up his work with the church to enter war service with the Y. M. C. A., and afterwards became a chaplain in the army. Rev. R. H. Moorman came as pastor July, 1918. He closed his work with the church September 1, 1919. During his pastorate plans for securing a more adequate building began to take a definite shape. October 1, 1919, R. L. Lemons, D. D., of Charleston, Missouri, became pastor. After a pastorate of not quite nine months he resigned June 6, 1920. September 1, 1920, Rev. C. M. Thompson, Jr., came to the pastorate of the church. Since his coming the commodious front basement has been completed, and a modern building with full sized gymnasium, up-to-date building for religious education, social rooms and lounging rooms and an auditorium will be completed on the corner of Fifth and Beech in the not

distant future. The cost of this building will be about \$100,000. The church has grown rapidly within the past few years, as have all the churches in Casper.

The First Presbyterian church of Casper was organized in the Natrona county court house March 16, 1913, with a charter membership of sixty-six. Services were held for a few Sundays in the court house and afterwards for several months in the Odd Fellows hall. A lot was purchased at the corner of Sixth and Durbin streets and a church building was erected in the fall of 1913. The first pulpit supply was Rev. Robertson McFadyen, who was succeeded by Rev. W. B. Fawcett, who continued as pastor for two and a half years. Rev. Walter H. Bradley, D. D., was called as pastor June 13, 1915, and served until September, 1920. Rev. Charles A. Wilson, whose previous pastorates were in Bethany church, Chicago, and the First Presbyterian church at Chanute, Kansas, received a call October 24, 1920, and entered at once upon the work. To meet the immediate needs of the congregation which outgrew the church building, the tabernacle on the corner of Sixth and Durbin streets was erected in the last week of January, 1921. During the year 1921, 230 new members were received into the church, and the Sunday school enrollment reached 600, requiring the use of both the church building and tabernacle for Sunday school purposes. This church organization purchased two residence lots on the southeast corner of Eighth and Wolcott streets on May 3, 1917, which are occupied by the Presbyterian manse. It is proposed by the Presbyterians to erect a new church during 1923, to cost about \$100,000.

The First Christian church of Casper is located on the corner of Grant street and Lind avenue. On the evening of October 7, 1920, Rev. Charles G. Stout, the state evangelistic pastor for Wyoming, under the direction of the United Christian Missionary society of St. Louis, Missouri, came to Casper and commenced the task of gathering the scattered members of the Christian church with the expectation of organizing them into a working force. Meetings were held on Sundays in the Odd Fellows building and for a short time in November of 1920 evening meetings were held in the city hall. A Sunday school was started a few weeks before the arrival of Mr. Stout in Casper under the superintendency of Mrs. C. D. Murane. An organization which was known as "The Sisterhood," which was made up of a group of women, most of whom had been members of the Christian church before coming to Casper, was in working order for several months prior to the coming of the evangelistic pastor. This organization met in the homes of the various members usually every two weeks. On Sunday, February 13, 1921, the members assembled

for the first time in the church home which was in process of construction and was simply enclosed and had the heat and lights installed only the day before. The minister called for \$6,000 with which to pay the deficit for the home, and in a few minutes the entire amount was subscribed on a half cash basis and the rest in six months pledge. Not only was the amount subscribed but it was more than a thousand dollars oversubscribed. In the building there is a splendid kitchen with modern equipment. The seating capacity of the building is 650 and there is a choir platform for more than eighty people. All this work was accomplished without soliciting anything from the public at large. Rev. Stout resigned as minister the first part of August, 1922, and he was succeeded by Rev. R. B. Hildebrand, who came from Billings, Oklahoma.

Under the auspices of the First Presbyterian church of Casper, the North Casper Community church was established in the fall of 1919, and on May 15, 1921, it was formally organized, with Rev. C. A. Marshall, formerly minister of Lingle, Wyoming, as the first pastor. A chapel was built in the fall of 1919 at 1009 North Durbin street and services were held irregularly until the church was regularly organized on the date stated above. Shortly after Rev. Marshall came to take charge of the church the membership was increased from about forty to more than 200 and the Sunday school attendance was increased from sixty to more than 160. This increased membership demanded more spacious quarters, and a large tabernacle was erected on the lot in the rear of the chapel. This church had its beginning in the work of Rev. Robert Marquis, a Presbyterian Sunday school missionary of Wyoming, and the first Sunday school services were held in a small tar-paper shack located at 130 East J street, the Sunday school being under Mrs. W. F. Hamilton. Rev. Benjamin B. Winter succeeded Rev. Marshall in June, 1922, but on August 22, Rev. Winter died as the result of an operation for appendicitis, and October 22 the pulpit was supplied by Rev. George Woodard, who came from Broadway, Nebraska.

A Community church, under the auspices of the Presbyterian church of Wyoming, was organized at Salt Creek early in July, 1922, and on July 8, Rev. Andrew Montgomery of St. Louis, Rev. Walter M. Irwin of Denver, Rev. E. T. Ferry of Greybull, Rev. J. F. Vernon of Evanston and Rev. David McMartin of Cheyenne held services in the town. In August, 1922, Rev. Emery Zimmerman of Bellevue, Nebraska, was appointed to take charge of the work, who was the first minister to permanently locate in Salt Creek.

A meeting was held in the First Methodist Episcopal church in Casper, July 5, 1917, by the colored people of the town, when two

hundred dollars was subscribed for the purpose of the organization of Grace African Methodist Episcopal church. Rev. R. L. Pape of Denver, the presiding elder of the Rocky Mountain district, assisted in the organization. Rev. J. O. Minor was the instigator of the meeting. There was an enrollment of fourteen members at this meeting. The first board of directors were H. C. Colman, Stark Oaklow, J. E. Russell, James Henry and T. McSwine.

Sunday, October 1, 1922, marked the organization of the Grace English Lutheran church in Casper. Rev. H. A. Anspach of Denver was in charge of the business and the installation. Rev. J. M. Cromer was selected as the pastor. The new church was organized with thirty-seven members. The council, or official board, elected, included: Robert V. Heinze and Thomas Thompson, elders; E. J. Chance, Albert Unger, and E. R. Redinski, deacons; and A. B. Shipstead, O. C. Hauptli, and Charles P. Ames, trustees. The organization purchased two lots on the corner of Ninth street and CY avenue and on Sunday, December 3, 1922, at 2:30 in the afternoon, at an outdoor service the ground was set apart for the holy purpose for which it was purchased. Addresses were made by a number of evangelical ministers and several other speakers. The church services were held in Odd Fellows hall until the chapel was finished.

Among the other church organizations in the city of Casper which have been established in recent years are the Christian Science, with its church edifice located on the corner of Fourth and Grant streets; the Trinity Lutheran (Missouri Synod) with its church on the corner of Park avenue and Fourth street; the West Side chapel, on the corner of Poplar and Fifteenth streets, the Kenwood Presbyterian church, located in Kenwood addition; the second Christian church, located at 604 East H street; the church of the Latter Day Saints, holding services in the Labor Union Temple.

#### LODGES AND CLUBS OF CASPER

Casper lodge No. 15, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, was the first benevolent organization in the town of Casper. It was organized September 13, 1893, and on December 27, 1893, it was instituted, constituted and consecrated. Grand Master E. F. Stahl of Cheyenne presided. The officers to serve for the first year were: Emerson H. Kimball, worshipful master; J. K. Calkins, senior warden; P. C. Nicolaysen, junior warden; M. P. Wheeler, secretary; D. A. Robertson, treasurer; James H. Bury, senior deacon; B. B. Brooks, junior deacon; J. J. Hurt, senior steward; Wm. Hines, junior steward; R. J. Devenport, chaplain; Samuel A. Currier, tyler. The lodge meetings



were held in the room over D. A. Robertson's saloon, on the west side of Center street, on the corner of the alley south from Second street. Regular meetings were held in this building until 1896, when the meetings were held in the Odd Fellows building, which had just been completed, until December, 1914, when the Masonic Temple, on the corner of Center and Third (now First) streets was completed. The cornerstone of the temple was laid under the auspices of the Masonic grand lodge of Wyoming on August 26, 1914. A lead box was placed in the receptacle of the stone, and in the box were the original plans of the temple, copies of the proceedings of the Masonic grand lodge bodies of Wyoming, together with copies of the constitution and by-laws of the local Masonic and Eastern Star bodies, a history of the local Masonic lodge, a panoramic view of the town of Casper taken in 1914, copies of the three local newspapers (the *Natrona County Tribune*, the *Casper Record* and the *Casper Press*), various American coins of different denominations, a copy of the directory of the town of Casper, small sacks of corn and wheat and a head of native wheat. The temple is used exclusively for the Masonic organizations with a club room for the members in the sub-basement, a reading room for the men and a card room for the ladies on the second floor, a splendid radiophone and dance hall on the same floor, with banquet room and lodge rooms on the third floor.

A meeting was called by John F. Leeper on October 3, 1894, for the purpose of organizing Fort Casper chapter No. 4, Order of the Eastern Star. At this meeting, there were sixteen members of the Masonic lodge present and fourteen ladies eligible to membership in the order. After it was decided to organize a chapter, officers were selected as follows: Mrs. Edness J. Kimball, worthy matron; John McGrath, worthy patron; Mrs. Anna M. Calkins, associate matron; Mrs. E. M. O'Neill, secretary; Mrs. Anna M. Seely, treasurer; Mrs. L. E. Townsend, conductress; Mrs. A. D. Robertson, associate conductress; Mrs. E. M. McCalmont, marshal; Miss F. C. Butler, warder; J. E. Daine, sentinel; Mrs. Sarah A. Bristol, chaplain; Mrs. Laura E. McGrath, organist; Mrs. Anna W. Denecke, Adah; Mrs. Berta N. Wheeler, Ruth; Mrs. R. A. Sprowll, Esther; Mrs. Belle Patton, Martha; Mrs. M. Hiestand, Electa. J. A. J. Stewart acted as deputy grand worthy patron and instituted the chapter on Thursday evening, November 29, 1894, with a membership of fifty-six, twenty-five ladies and thirty-one gentlemen.

Capitol chapter, No. 8, Royal Arch Masons, was organized on December 27, 1897, and instituted December 28, 1897, with officers as follows: C. H. Townsend, high priest; DeForest Richards, king; E. P. Rohrbaugh, scribe; E. F. Stahl, captain of the host; H. Bungar,

principal sojourner; C. H. Bryant, royal arch captain; J. V. Cantlin, master of third veil; John Morton, master of second veil; S. Solomon, master of first veil; K. McDonald, treasurer; A. D. Chamberlin, secretary.

Apollo Commandery, Knights Templar, No. 8, was organized November 4, 1889, and constituted on June 7, 1900, and the officers elected and installed for the remainder of the year were: C. H. Townsend, eminent commander; L. C. Seely, generalissimo; B. B. Brooks, captain general; E. P. Rohrbaugh, prelate; N. S. Bristol, treasurer; A. J. Mokler, recorder; Patrick Sullivan, senior warden; Wm. Booker, warden; P. C. Nicolaysen, sword bearer; J. J. Svendsen, sentinel. Trustees: B. B. Brooks, Patrick Sullivan and W. S. Kimball.

By authority from the illustrious grand master of the Royal and Select Masters, on the evening of April 30, 1918, C. H. Townsend communicated the Cryptic degrees of Masonry to fifteen companions, and at a meeting held on May 8, 1918, Wyoming Council, No. 1, Royal and Select Masters was organized in Casper, with the election of the following-named officers: C. H. Townsend, thrice illustrious master; E. P. Rohrbaugh, deputy master; M. P. Wheeler, principal conductor of the work; L. B. Townsend, treasurer; V. W. Mokler, recorder; H. F. Shaffer, captain of the guard; Lew M. Gay, conductor of the council; Oscar Hiestand, steward; W. F. Shaffer, sentinel.

Casper lodge No. 22, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, was the second benevolent society to be organized in Casper. During the early part of February, 1894, the organization was perfected and for several weeks the members attended a school of instruction, and on Tuesday evening, February 27, 1894, the lodge was instituted and officers installed as follows: A. T. Seymour, noble grand; J. H. Bury, vice grand; H. A. Lilly, secretary; Lew Seely, treasurer; J. E. Dain, warden; Peter Heagney, conductor; Robert White, L.S.N.G.; Robert Crosthwait, R.S.N.G.; Frank Bull, R.S.V.G.; Dan McKenzie, L.S.V.G.; John McClure, R.S.S.; Charles P. Dasch, L.S.S.; P. A. Demorest, chaplain; George Walker, junior P.G., and D.D. G.M. The Odd Fellows building was constructed during the year 1896, and the laying of the cornerstone occurred on September 22 of that year. The services were under the auspices of the Odd Fellows, Masons and Order of the Eastern Star. The cornerstone was cut by Dan McKenzie, and in the center of the stone was placed a brass box made by Lewis D. Seely, the box containing copies of the by-laws of the Odd Fellows and Masonic lodges and a history and list of members of the Odd Fellows, Masonic, Encampment and Eastern Star lodges of Casper, together with copies of the town ordinances, the *Natrona County Tribune*, the *Wyoming Derrick*, the



OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF CASPER LODGE, NO. 15, A. F. AND A. M., 1897

*From left to right: Top row:* W. A. Donecke, T. A. Dean, W. S. Kimball, C. H. Townsend, J. E. Leeper, Harold Banner, M. P. Wheeler. *Second row:* F. S. Barger, W. D. Rhoades, L. D. Seely, F. H. Kimball, J. E. Dam, Frank Fisher, O. M. Rice. *Third row:* Charles O'Neill, Charles Ewing, Charles Mall, P. C. Hays, Ed. S. White, J. J. Svendsen, S. A. Currier. *Fourth row:* Patrick Sullivan, D. A. Robertson, J. A. Sheffner, J. W. Dickie, W. F. Dunn, P. C. Nicolayson, James Hart, David Graham. *Fifth row:* F. L. Riser (visitor), John May (visitor), James H. Bury, John McGrath.



*Cheyenne Sun-Leader* and the *Wyoming Tribune*, a one dollar silver certificate of 1896, presented by John McGrath, a silver dollar of 1894, the year of the organization of the lodge, and a nickel of 1896, both being presented by M. P. Wheeler, and a Columbian half dollar, presented by Robert White. The formal opening of the building was held on Christmas night of 1896, with a grand ball, to which the general public was invited.

Enterprise Encampment No. 9, I.O.O.F., was instituted on December 18, 1895, and the following-named officers were elected to serve for the first year: James H. Bury, chief patriarch; J. E. Dain, high priest; L. C. Seely, senior warden; Colin Campbell, junior warden; M. P. Wheeler, scribe; Robert White, treasurer.

Natrona Rebekah lodge No. 13 was organized December 5, 1901, and instituted on December 22, 1901, with the following officers: Mrs. M. P. Wheeler, noble grand; Mrs. L. C. Seely, vice grand; Mrs. E. B. Shaffner, secretary; Mrs. Hannah McClure, treasurer; Mrs. W. C. Ricker, conductor; Mrs. E. A. Johnson, chaplain; Miss Adah Turner, warden; Mrs. Frank Jameson, inside guard; Mrs. C. B. Miller, organist.

W. L. Kuykendall Rebekah lodge No. 39 was instituted on June 19, 1915. The officers for the first term were: Eva Sawyer, noble grand; Mable Keith, secretary; Rola Luxon, vice grand; Dorothy Lloyd, treasurer; Mary Keford, warden; Alice Ward, conductor; Myrtle Buxton, R.S.N.G.; Daisy Hubly, L.S.N.G.; Emma Kocher, L.S.V.G.; Mayme L. Davis, L.S.V.G.; Belle Henry, chaplain; C. M. Walker, inside guard; P. D. Cunningham, outside guard; Amy Deisher, musician.

The Imperial Order of Muscovites, Kremlin Azov, was instituted April 16, 1921. The first officers elected were: Royal regent, A. T. Phillips; czar, E. Richard Shipp; royal counsellor, Lyle C. Garner; royal grand duke, W. T. Bigler; royal governor, E. D. Hoffman; minister of records, Ira W. Naylor; minister of finance, Elof Engdahl; royal custodian, Oscar D. Miller; royal inspector, Byron Reid; inner guard, Arthur Kosanke; outer guard, George Rummel.

Natrona Camp No. 331, Woodmen of the World, was organized in Casper on Saturday evening, November 28, 1896, with thirty-one charter members. The officers chosen for the first year were: Council commander, Alex. T. Butler; adviser lieutenant, S. W. Conwell; banker, Henry Bayer; clerk, A. E. Case; escort, Colin Campbell; watchman, George Moyer; sentry, Oscar Truax; physician, T. A. Dean; managers, E. B. Shaffner, E. D. Norton, and Patrick Sullivan.

Casper aerie, Fraternal Order of Eagles, was instituted Saturday evening, January 24, 1903, with a charter membership of 127. Officers

elected to serve for the first year were: President, John McGrath; vice president, John Curran; chaplain, E. F. Seaver; secretary, A. T. Phillips; treasurer, C. C. P. Webel; conductor, W. Forest; inside guard, C. C. Johnson; outside guard, J. M. Carpenter; trustees, Wm. Hines, J. A. Sheffner and C. M. Hawks; physician, T. A. Dean; district deputy, Charles Willet.

Casper Lodge No. 19, Knights of Pythias, was instituted by Grand Chancellor E. E. LaFrienier on March 27, 1916. The officers the first year were: C. W. Thomas, chancellor commander; W. P. Holman, vice chancellor; C. P. Johnson, master of work; Perry Elswick, master at arms; Wilbur Foshay, master of finance; H. J. Peterson, master of exchequer; C. E. Littlefield, keeper of records and seal; J. M. Whisenhunt, inner guard; W. G. Breon, outer guard.

Eunice Temple No. 16, Pythian Sisters, was instituted by Grand Chief Mary Paterson, April 8, 1920, with forty-one charter members, twenty-two sisters and nineteen knights. The officers for the first year were: Past Chief, Elva Anderson; M.E.C., Mina Whisenhunt; E.S., Zedda Hemry; E.J., Besse Collier; manager, Ethel Bunce; M. of R.C., Minnie Twiggs; M. of F., Lizzie Evers; protector, Lillian Hawes; guard, Sylvia Bauer.

Abbas Temple No. 242, Dramatic Order Knights of Khorassan, was instituted by Deputy Imperial Prince Finis Bentley, February 25, 1922, with a charter membership of 116. The officers elected to serve for the first year were: Royal visier, F. S. Price; grand emir, W. J. King; sheik, Byron Reid; mahedi, Clayton K. Reed; secretary, L. T. Hall; treasurer, H. E. Hawes; satrap, W. R. McMillian; sahib, Thomas Mulligan; mokamia, B. H. Holmes; saruk, Dean Wolcott; master of ceremonies, W. G. Schultzline; escorts, A. R. Jameson and Sam Weller; royal princes, E. E. Fitch, Laramie; J. H. Giroux, Sheridan; O. A. Sholz, Basin; W. P. Holman, Sr., Casper.

The Loyal Order of Moose No. 1182 has a large membership in Casper and in the early spring of 1919 purchased a building site on the northwest corner of A and Wolcott streets and appointed a committee to devise ways and means for the erection of a modern four-story building. The basement for the building was finished during the first year, but the main building, which cost in the neighborhood of \$200,000, was not finished until the early months of 1923. The first two floors of this building are used for an auditorium, which has a seating capacity of about 2,300 people. The third floor is occupied by the lodge rooms and on the fourth floor are forty-six office rooms. The basement is used for club rooms for the members.

Casper council No. 1563, Knights of Columbus, was instituted Sunday, April 23, 1911. Forty members from Cheyenne, Chadron,



Denver and Omaha were present, and about forty men were initiated into the order. The following were the first officers: J. P. Cantillon, grand knight; Jeremiah Mahoney, deputy grand knight; W. F. Dunn, financial secretary; W. H. Maly, recording secretary; J. C. Kamp, chancellor; Edward Schulte, warden; C. E. Wheeler, treasurer; W. G. Noonan, inner guard; G. L. McKeever, outer guard; J. E. Schulte, advocate; T. B. McDonough, James McFadden and P. J. O'Connor, trustees.

Casper Lodge, B. P. O. Elks No. 1353, was instituted May 18, 1918. Officers of Cheyenne Lodge No. 660 instituted the Lodge. There was a charter membership of sixty. The first officers were: A. E. Stirrett, exalted ruler; W. W. Keefe, esteemed leading knight; Edward J. Schulte, esteemed loyal knight; A. M. Garbutt, esteemed lecturing knight; Robert Cohen, secretary; W. J. Chamberlain, treasurer; C. W. Thomas, tiler; trustees, M. P. Wheeler, Oscar Hiestand and Jeremiah Mahoney. The meetings were held in the Odd Fellows hall until late in the fall of 1921, when they were held in the Elks' home on the corner of Seventh and Center streets, which was erected at a cost of about one hundred thousand dollars.

Caledonian clubs in Casper have been organized and re-organized, but after a short life of activity interest in these clubs began to wane, until early in the spring of 1920, when the members of the Caledonian club perfected the organization of Clan Stuart, No. 248, Order of Scottish Clans, for the purpose of keeping interest in the club. The Stuart Clan is under the jurisdiction of the Royal Clan, Order of Scottish Clans, in Boston, Massachusetts. Meetings of the local clan are held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Following is a list of the first officers of the organization: Peter Holden, chief; James Fraser, lanist; A. M. Weir, secretary; John Glendenning, financial secretary; David Fraser, treasurer; A. P. Kennedy, senior henchman; Wm. Duncan, junior henchman; Thomas Rutherford, chaplain; John Latta, seneschal; M. C. Keith, physician; Colin Sutherland, warder; Robert Little, sentinel; Ninian Duncan, piper.

The Rotary Club of Casper, Wyoming, was organized on March 12, 1919, with the following men as charter members: J. T. Gratiot, Earl C. Boyle, J. W. Johnson, J. C. Kamp, W. W. Keefe, Julian Lever, L. F. McMahon, Geo. B. Nelson, L. A. Reed, E. J. Schulte, Carl F. Shumaker, A. E. Stirrett, O. L. Walker, Ira G. Wetherill and M. P. Wheeler. The charter was granted on May 1, 1919. J. T. Gratiot was elected president; O. L. Walker, vice-president; L. F. McMahon, secretary, and Carl Shumaker, treasurer. On April 12, 1920, O. L. Walker was elected president; L. A. Reed, vice-president; C. F. Shumaker, treasurer, and Geo. B. Nelson, secretary. On April 11,

1921, L. A. Reed was elected president: A. E. Stirrett, vice-president; Geo. B. Nelson, secretary, and C. F. Shumaker, treasurer. On April 10, 1922, A. E. Stirrett was elected president; B. B. Brooks, vice-president; Geo. B. Nelson, secretary, and C. F. Shumaker, treasurer. During the life of the club the members have contributed to many worthy undertakings, among them being the Boy Scout cabin at the foot of Casper mountain, which was paid for entirely by the Rotary club and donated to the Boy Scouts. In 1921 the club equipped two playgrounds in Casper with apparatus at the expense of about \$700 and also contributed \$450 to the municipal swimming pool. In 1921-22 the Rotarians gave gold medals to the best drilled private of Natrona County High school cadets, and gold medals to the girls in high school making the best record in domestic science. They have also contributed toward a college fund to help worthy boys and girls through college by lending them money without interest. Up until 1923 two boys have been helped through college. Luncheons are held once each week for the purpose of taking up matters of interest to the community and promoting good fellowship. The club has the unique feature of having but one member from each line of business or profession. The motto of the club is: "He Profits Most Who Serves Best." On January 1, 1923, the club had a membership of forty-one.

The organization meeting of the Kiwanis club of Casper was held at the Henning hotel March 10, 1921. Preliminary work tending toward the organization of the club had been previously done by International Field Representative Edward C. Bacon, and at the time of the first meeting the charter membership roster had been closed with 103 names of Casper business and professional men, not more than two of whom were selected from one classification, and no two of whom represented the same firm. The first officers of the local branch of Kiwanis International were elected as follows: Charles A. Cullen, president; G. R. Hagens, first vice-president; H. R. Lathrop, second vice-president; Harry L. Black, secretary; L. B. Townsend, treasurer. A board of directors composed of the following members served during the first year: Hugh L. Patton, B. L. Scherck, Arthur K. Lee, Herbert J. Peterson, A. J. Cunningham, W. J. Bailey and George W. Campbell. The installation requirements of the international organization were quickly complied with and on the evening of July 1, 1921, the body was converted into a full-fledged branch of the Kiwanis International by the formal presentation of its charter by District Governor Clem W. Collins of Denver. From the time of its organization the Kiwanis club has devoted the interest and the influence of its membership on behalf of the civic good of the com-

munity. It has participated in every civic enterprise and rendered notable service to every worthy cause. No campaign for the support of the Casper Chamber of Commerce, Boy Scouts, Salvation Army, Red Cross, or other publicly supported organization, has been without one or more Kiwanis teams in the field. The most notable single-handed effort of the club has been the operation of the annual summer camp for girls of Casper, in which the club met all the expense over and above the camp fees of the girls. The local club has carried out faithfully the program of the international organization. It fostered and sponsored the organization of a Kiwanis club at Douglas. Its official organ is *The Casper Kiwanian*, issued bi-monthly by the club, publishing Kiwanis news, both of local and national interest. The live interest evinced by members in matters pertaining to the welfare of the community has made the Kiwanis club of Casper a strong factor in the civic life of the city.

The Casper club of the Lions International was organized at the Henning hotel in Casper on April 23, 1922, with thirty-six charter members and the following-named officers: Burke H. Sinclair, president; M. C. Keith, first vice-president; John B. Barnes, second vice-president; Homer F. Shaffer, third vice-president; Robert N. Ogden, secretary; William H. Lloyd, Guy A. Holmes, Carl A. Taylor, Ray Cook, directors. Since the organization of the club it has had a very active career. The weekly meetings take the form of a dinner every Wednesday night and at this dinner, various questions pertaining to local civic affairs are discussed. During the time since the organization of the club the members have participated in all of the local public movements. In all drives for the purpose of raising funds for such organizations as the local Boy Scouts, Y. W. C. A., Salvation Army, Chamber of Commerce, etc., the club has been represented by an active working committee. The club has always entered into discussion of civic problems with a constructive spirit and has attempted at all times to be in the forefront whenever action was demanded. Specifically, it might be mentioned that the club took the leading part and accomplished the greatest result in the Near East drive, which was held during the summer of 1922. Again, the club accepted the proposition of the Chamber of Commerce to provide funds for and look after the installation of one of the ornamental lights for the Platte river bridge near the city. These funds have been provided and the club chose as its pioneer after whom to name its light, Ezra Meeker, the famous traveler through this section of the country in the early days. One of the greatest achievements of the club has been the initiation of the community chest plan. The general objects and purposes of the Lion club in Casper, as in all other localities where

such clubs exist, may be summed up by the following: To promote the theory and practice of the principles of good government and good citizenship. To take an active interest in the civic, commercial, social and moral welfare of the community. To unite the members in the bonds of friendship, good fellowship and mutual understanding. To provide a forum for the full and free discussion of all matters of public interest, partisan politics and sectarian religion alone excepted. To encourage efficiency and promote high ethical standards in business and professions; provided that no club shall hold out as one of its objects financial benefits to its members.

The organization of the Casper Boy Scout council was fostered and promulgated by the Casper Chamber of Commerce. Within a short time the preliminary work was completed and March 24, 1920, a formal charter was granted to a representative group of Casper citizens for the conduct of a local council of Boy Scouts. Funds for the promotion and maintenance of this council are raised by popular subscription and the citizenship at large are satisfied that the money they contribute to this organization is one of the very best investments they can make, for after two years they are convinced that the scout movement is character-building and the training for good citizenship among the boys, and it is sure to make real men out of the real boys. In August each year summer camps for the members of the troops are held in the mountains, lasting two weeks, and these camps are visited by many of the business and professional men of the city who show a deep interest in the welfare of the boys. The first year's budget, amounting to \$8,000, was subscribed in less than two hours and each succeeding year the business men of the city have considered it a privilege and a pleasure to contribute for the support of this worthy organization. The Casper council has the largest membership of any council in the state.

#### CASPER'S WATER SUPPLY

A "system" of water works was first proposed for the town of Casper in the late autumn of 1890. The proposition was the "construction of a large irrigation canal, three miles long and twelve feet wide at the bottom, to be taken from the Platte river west of town, and carried over as much of the Carey land as possible, with laterals leading into and through the town." An engineer from Cheyenne surveyed the ditches, and if the scheme was carried to a successful conclusion, it was said by the citizens that Casper and the CY ranch would "blossom as the rose." The scheme was never carried out, however, and the people continued to pump the water from the wells

that had been dug and to haul it from the river and Garden and Elkhorn creeks. The matter was officially brought up again in the early spring of 1891, when a notice was published in the newspapers of the town to the effect that "the citizens of Casper are requested to meet with the town council, at the town hall, on Monday evening, March 16, at 7:30 o'clock, to discuss the feasibility and advisability of providing a system of water works for the city. The council desires to ascertain the true sentiment of the town, not only as to the advisability and practicability of securing a water works system, but concerning the kind of system to be adopted, in case the sentiment of the meeting is favorable for the construction."

The water supply for the town in those days was furnished by shallow dug wells in the residence section, and on Center street there were three wells and two on Second street. The wells in the business part of town were mainly for fire protection. They were equipped with a force pump with double handles, so that four men could operate them, and thus keep the bucket brigade supplied with water in case of a fire. Luckily, however, there were few fires.

The water in the wells in all parts of the town became polluted in a short time, and sickness and death resulted, especially among the children. Then the water that was used for drinking and cooking was hauled in barrels from Elkhorn and Garden creeks.

At the meeting held on the date mentioned above, the local newspaper said that a "large number of citizens met with the council," and it was stated that "it had been found that the water could be piped a distance of five and one-fourth miles to a reservoir on a hill one mile southeast of town, from which a main pipe could be laid to the city." No one at the meeting could give any definite figures as to the cost of the system, "but it was thought \$10,000 would be ample." A committee, consisting of P. A. Demorest, A. McKinney, C. K. Bucknum, P. C. Nicolaysen and William Kranish was appointed to secure estimates on different systems and ascertain which was the cheapest and best.

In about two weeks this committee met with the town council and made its report to the effect that it "favored a windmill and tank system, the tank to be located just north of town, on a line with Center street (where the court house is now located). From the tank it was proposed to lay a water main to First (now Midwest avenue) and Center street, thence east one block. The line was to be extended east on Second street to Durbin street and west to David street. The tank was to be 16x24 feet, on a forty-foot tower, and to have a capacity of 16,000 barrels, which would give sufficient pressure to throw a stream fifty feet high. A twenty-foot wheel windmill was



proposed. This system, including 750 feet of fire hose, nozzles, etc., exclusive of digging the well, would cost about \$8,000.

It was proposed to issue bonds in the amount of \$5,000 for the construction of such a system, and accordingly a proclamation was issued by the town council for an election to be held on May 12, 1891, to vote upon such bonds. Before the election was held, however, there was a remonstrance circulated and numerous signed by citizens and taxpayers against the issuance of the bonds on the grounds that such a system was inadequate.

At the election fifty-one votes were cast for the bonds and thirty-one votes against, but the vote proved to be irregular and illegal on account of the fact that there was not one vote cast in accordance with the instructions on the ballot, and the bonds failed to carry. Thus the matter of water works was held up for a number of years and the people continued to pump the water from wells and have it hauled in barrels from the river and the creeks.

On Monday, September 4, 1893, at a meeting of the town council, Mayor C. K. Bucknum entertained a motion from Councilman John McGrath to the effect that the town of Casper vote water bonds to the amount of \$30,000, and on Tuesday following a special meeting of the council was held and an ordinance and proclamation were read and approved calling for a special election on Tuesday, October 10, 1893, submitting the proposition to the qualified electors of the town to issue bonds in the amount of \$30,000, for the purpose of constructing, purchasing, extending, maintaining, and regulating a system of water works to supply the town of Casper with water for the extinguishing of fires and for the supply of the inhabitants thereof with water for domestic, manufacturing, and other purposes.

The election was held and the bonds were carried, and a survey was made for a gravity system and the estimate of the cost submitted, the estimate providing for a reservoir 60x132 feet, twenty feet deep, to contain 1,188,000 gallons of water, sufficient for a town with a population of 2,000. Twenty-five fire plugs to be distributed throughout the city were also provided for and the entire cost was estimated at \$26,670.

The bonds were advertised to be sold at 12 o'clock on December 15, 1893, but no bids were received on that date. Consequently, the bonds were not sold.

At an adjourned meeting of the town council held on Saturday, December 16, 1893, an option was taken from Adam & Williams for water right number one from the east fork of Elkhorn creek, the contract calling for a perpetual supply of water to the volume of six-tenths of a cubic foot per second, which would be adequate for a



population of over 3,000. The amount agreed upon for the payment of this water right was \$1,500, the option on the right to hold good until July 1, 1894. Two hundred fifty dollars of the purchase price was paid in advance.

On February 8, 1894, J. A. Jones, representing the Michigan Pipe Line company of Bay City, Michigan, submitted a proposition to the town council to survey the line, furnish and lay the pipe, build the reservoir, and furnish the whole system for the sum of \$30,000 in 6 per cent gold bonds of the town of Casper, the work to commence as soon as the frost was out of the ground, and continue without interruption until completed.

The proposition was accepted by the town council and a contract was to be drawn up and signed before March 15, 1894. The contract was not signed, however, on account of Jones failing to put in an appearance, and the town council thereupon rejected the proposition of the Michigan Pipe Line company. Another effort was made to sell the bonds, but on account of the stringency in the money market and the unsettled condition generally, the bonds were not sold.

A petition was circulated among the people of the town asking them to subscribe for the bonds, but at that time the people felt that they could not spare the money, and the money was not raised. Again the water works system for Casper failed to materialize. With all hope gone, the town council ordered that the five town wells, with their hand pumps, be put in shape to afford fire protection with the bucket brigade, and water was hauled to town in barrels with team and wagon for domestic purposes and sold at very reasonable prices, as will be noted from the following advertisement which appeared in the local newspapers:

"On July 24, 1895, F. E. Seeley will commence delivering pure mountain water in the city. This water is as soft as rainwater and is taken from Garden creek, only a short distance this side of the falls, and is free from alkali and all impurities. For washing or drinking purposes it will pay to use this water. Mr. Seeley will run his wagon daily and he should receive a liberal patronage. He will deliver in either barrel or half-barrel lots, to suit the customer. The price is fixed at 35 cents per barrel."

Mr. Seeley furnished the water for the residents of the town during the summer of 1895.

On June 12, 1895, a special election was called for July 13, 1895, authorizing the issuance of bonds to the amount of \$23,000, for the purpose of "constructing, purchasing, extending, maintaining and regulating a system of water works to supply the said town of Casper with water, for the supplying of the inhabitants thereof with water for domestic and manufacturing purposes." George B. McCalmont was mayor, W. A. Denecke, J. A. Warner, P. C. Nicolaysen and John

McGrath were members of the council when the election proclamation was issued. At the special election 236 votes were cast for the bonds and there were only two votes cast against the proposition.

The bonds were sold on August 24, 1895, and bids for the construction of the system were advertised, to be opened at 12 o'clock, September 16, 1895. C. E. McGarvey, of Cheyenne, was the successful bidder, his price being \$23,000 in water bonds, \$6,000 in town warrants, payable in one, two, and three years, and \$3,000 in cash. Work was commenced at once, beginning at Elkhorn creek, about seven miles south of town. At the intake a dam fifty feet in width and nine feet high backed the water up 150 yards, and below this dam was built the settling basin. For the first 9,000 feet, the mains were of eight-inch pipe, and then for 18,000 feet, the pipe was six inches, after which a four-inch pipe carried the water to the town. The fall from the dam on the foothills of Casper mountain to the level of the town is about 900 feet, and three pressure regulators were installed and the pressure was to be reduced to seventy-five pounds. Work progressed very slowly on account of digging the ditches in some places through solid rock, but in the early spring of 1896 the mains were being laid in the streets of the town, and on Tuesday, May 26, 1896, the water was in the pipes in the town. In the evening on that date a test was made by the firemen before the town council and a large number of citizens. The first connection was made at 6:30 at the corner of First (now Midwest avenue) and Center streets and when the water was turned on a two-inch stream shot into the air 120 feet; the stream was turned on the Natrona hotel and the adjacent buildings, as well as on a considerable number of people who did not succeed in getting a safe distance away. After half an hour's thorough test at this point, the hose was then connected at the corner of Second and Center streets, and the stream of water was shot on top and over the Grand Central hotel; the full force was turned on the roof of the Metcalf store (where the Rialto theatre is now located) and hundreds of shingles were ripped off from the roof of the building by the force of the water; a great many more of the spectators were drenched, and when the mayor and town council pronounced the demonstrations satisfactory and signified that the system would be accepted, pandemonium broke loose, and it was not the water from Elkhorn creek that was drunk by most of the male population that night, but the next morning the cool and refreshing H<sub>2</sub>O was in great demand.

There were nine saloons on the west side of Center street at that time and the crowd lined up in front of the bar six deep at the first saloon. After all had participated in the libations, they went on to the next saloon, and then to the next and the next, adding to their

numbers a great many people as they progressed down the row to the last saloon. If a man refused to buy, his body was hoisted onto the bar, and his valuables and clothing were stripped from him and held as security for payment of the round of drinks. There were not many who refused to buy, and none refused to partake.

The main celebration was over before midnight, and those who could walk, wended their way home, and those who could not navigate, and there were many in that condition, were allowed to rest wherever they might fall until their minds cleared and their legs became less wobbly and then they too, found their way home and slept off the effects of their over-indulgence.

At that time Casper's population was less than 1,000 and the amount of water consumed was amply supplied by this system for a number of years.

November 6, 1897, a contract was awarded Noel R. Gascho and Charles Atmore by the town council to put in about 1,700 feet of additional water main to the city water plant, the pipe to be laid on First and Maple, and Third and Beech streets, to be completed by December 1. Their bond was duly approved and the work of putting in the pipe was begun at once. Their bid was to put in the pipe for 14½ cents per foot, the town to furnish the pipe.

The reservoir about a mile south of town was built in the summer of 1899 at a cost of \$3,455. The construction is brick and concrete; the wall is four feet thick at the bottom and two feet thick at the top, and it is 12 feet deep.

In less than three years after the system had been installed the alkaline in the water had eaten its way through the steel spiral pipe in more than a hundred places; there were leaks all along the line from the reservoir to the town, and the mains throughout the town were continually bursting. Several men were kept busy all the time making repairs and replacing the pipe. In the summer and fall of 1900 more than \$7,500 was expended in replacing the steel spiral pipe, which had become so rusted and rotten that it was useless, with cast iron pipe, and in the summers of 1901 and 1902 all the spiral pipe in town was torn out and replaced with cast iron pipe.

In July, 1905, there were 244 residences supplied with water from the municipal water works, 82 private stables, 25 private baths, 47 closets, 9 saloons, 3 blacksmith shops, 3 barbershops, 4 apartments, 3 meat markets, 2 laundries, 4 hotels, 6 restaurants, 1 boarding house, 15 stores, 18 offices, 1 bottling works, 1 tobacco manufacturer, 1 tailor shop, 3 lodging houses, 2 banks, 3 motors, 1 electric light plant, 1 oil refinery, 1 depot tank, 3 churches, 1 reading room, 2 school houses and 4 livery stables.

Clarence T. Johnston, the state engineer, made a survey and located the site for the Sage creek reservoir in June, 1906. The estimated cost for the construction of this reservoir was between \$5,000 and \$6,000. A great many improvements had been made in the water works system this year, and the steel spiral main leading from the reservoir to town had been replaced with 30,000 pounds of cast iron mains. The Sage creek reservoir, about four miles south of Casper, was finished in the fall of 1907. With these improvements it was thought that Casper was provided with a water works system that would supply the demand for a great many years, but on July 2, 1910, at a special election, the people voted in favor of \$25,000 water bonds and \$20,000 sewer bonds. These bonds were sold in January, 1911, and during the summer of that year the money was expended for new pipe and other improvements. But the population of the town increased so rapidly that bonds were voted on May 17, 1914, in the amount of \$75,000 for the purpose of purchasing and installing a pumping plant, the securing of water rights and the laying of a ten-inch main to the lower reservoir. Fifteen thousand dollars in bonds were voted at the same time for the extension of Casper's sewer system, but in less than five years it was found necessary to issue bonds in the amount of \$260,000 for water bonds, and \$60,000 for sewer bonds, the special election being held on March 19, 1919, for this purpose. A new pumping plant, a new water gallery in the Platte river a mile west from town and new mains doubled the capacity of the water system, and when these improvements were completed in December, 1920, 2,500 gallons of water a minute could be supplied the city. In 1919, 204,452,131 gallons of water was used by consumers in Casper, against 141,784,700 gallons used in 1918. On October 4, 1920, a chlorination plant was ordered installed for the purification of Casper's water supply. In 1921 practically \$35,000 was expended by the city for water works improvements and extensions.

At the beginning of the year 1922 Casper's water works system was estimated to be valued at about \$705,000. Included in this property are the two engines and pumps, valued at about \$32,000; the pumping station, filter galleries, traps, land, etc., valued at \$138,000; dams, reservoirs, pipe, etc., valued at half a million dollars; with a thousand and one odd articles of sufficient value to bring the whole up to the above estimated value. Water bonds amounting to \$914,000 were outstanding against the city of Casper on January 1, 1922.

During the year 1921, water rents collected from consumers amounted to \$90,381.91, and the disbursements for this department was \$71,273.84, thus showing a profit to the city from the water department of \$19,108.07.

## CASPER'S FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Nine citizens of the town of Casper met in Henry A. Lilly's office at 7:30 in the evening of October 12, 1895, for the purpose of organizing a volunteer fire company, the duty of the members of which, according to a resolution adopted at the first meeting, was the "fighting of fires, if any should occur at any time."

The meeting was called to order by H. A. Lilly, and, upon motion, Mr. Lilly acted as the regular chairman during the evening, and W. S. Irwin was the secretary. The others who were present at this meeting were W. C. Ricker, Sam Demorest, Emanuel Erben, B. F. Blair, J. B. Miller, E. Jones and C. E. Nichols. Mr. Lilly was elected chief, or foreman of the company; W. C. Ricker, assistant chief; Sam Demorest, hose captain; W. S. Irwin, pipeman and nozzleman; Emanuel Erben, treasurer, and W. S. Irwin, secretary.

The next meeting was held on the 19th of October, when the constitution and by-laws were adopted. A ruling was made that all those who became members in the future should pay fifty cents as initiation fee, but those who were already members should be exempt from the payment of this fee. A collection was taken up among the members at this second meeting to purchase stationery for the department, and \$1.95 was donated. At this meeting the names of Thomas Clark, Charles Warner, C. H. Townsend and R. R. Phoenix were added to the membership list. It was decided that the firemen's uniform should consist of a blue shirt with red collar, with the initials "C. F. D. No. 1." worked on the front of the shirt in white. A red belt, with ordinary trousers, completed the uniform. At the meeting held October 26 the names of J. E. Lovejoy, W. F. McMillen and Henry Bayer were added to its membership roll, and at the meeting held on December 28, Patrick Sullivan and W. A. Denecke were admitted as members. On January 4, 1896, Colin Campbell, John T. McGrath, Douglas Fuller, Walter Trotman, W. S. Kimball, R. C. Swift, Oscar Hiestand, George Rhoades, Carl Sommers, Albert White, and George Moyer were elected as members. At this meeting C. H. Townsend was elected chief; John McGrath, assistant chief; Colin Campbell, second assistant chief; H. A. Lilly, captain; J. E. Lovejoy, secretary, and W. S. Kimball, treasurer.

The first dance given by the fire company was on New Year's eve, 1895, and the report of the committee showed that fifty-six tickets were sold at \$1.00 per ticket. The expense items were: Music, \$12.50; piano, \$5.00; printing, \$3.00; wax, 50c; distributing bills, 50c; dray and caller, \$2.00. Total, \$32.50. The next dance was given on Saint Valentine's day, February 14, and it was the



custom of this company for the first few years to give a dance on the evening of Saint Valentine's day, but in later years the date of the annual ball was changed to Washington's birthday. Every business man in Casper bought at least one ticket and some of them bought a dozen, and it was by this means the members of the company secured the money with which to purchase their paraphernalia and apparatus. In addition to the money raised by this means, some of the business men made an annual donation and the town council would occasionally make a small appropriation for the benefit of the company.

One hose cart, with 150 feet of hose, and a nozzle and a trumpet for the chief, was the complete list of the property first purchased by this company, but how the firemen at that time used the hose is a mystery, for there were no water works in Casper then and when a fire occurred the flames were fought by a "bucket brigade." The water was pumped from the town wells by means of hand pumps and the buckets of water were passed from man to man from the pump to the scene of the fire.

After the water system was in operation the hose cart and the 150 feet of hose were put into use and after a few years a second cart and more hose were purchased. The alarm of fire was sounded by ringing the bell which was in the town hall tower and the house for the hose carts was immediately south of the town hall. These hose carts were transported from the hose house to the scene of the fire by about a dozen men who pulled on a long rope fastened to the front of the cart and about six men would take their places behind the cart and push. It was hard work and the quick time could not be made that is made nowadays with the auto carts and trucks and engines, but the town was small and the distance to the farthest house within the town limits was not much more than four or five blocks from the hose house.

This hose company was the winner of many prizes in contests of "hose racing," defeating the Douglas company as well as other companies in the state. A dozen men belonged to the racing team, eight of whom wore a harness and they were hitched to the front of the cart. Two men ran behind the cart, but they were not allowed to push, but after running a given distance one of the men in the rear stretched the hose to a fire plug and the other man made the connection of the hose to the plug. When a certain length of hose had been reached the nozzle was connected with the hose and the water was then turned on and when the stream of water spurted out of the nozzle, the time was taken from the time of the start. The team doing all this in the least time was the winner. These contests were





# CASPER FIRE DEPARTMENT, 1913

*From left to right—Top row: S. W. Conwell, Wilbur Foshay, W. F. Dunn, Z. Q. Miller, George Kropp, Charles Warner, Jeremiah Mahoney, Jerry Donovan. Second row: John Keil, John Hammon, J. West McDowell, Oscar Hiestand (Assistant Chief), Harold Banner (Chief), Wm. Jones, Wm. Kropp, Jack Stacey, Dave Williams. Bottom row: Fred Villnave, Frank Sturgeon, Wm. Tripeny, J. T. Scott, Jake Nelson, Roy Sample.*



exciting and oftentimes there was only a few seconds' difference in the time made by the teams.

When Casper grew to be quite a large town and the dwelling houses were built as far as ten and twelve blocks from the hose house, arrangements were made with the draymen to haul the hose carts to the fires; the first drayman to arrive at the hose house after an alarm had been turned in got the job and he was paid two dollars for his services.

The firemen were exempt from jury duty and the town made no charge against them for the use of water at their residences. A list of the firemen was filed with the county clerk each year in order that they might be exempted from jury duty and the lists filed in 1900 and 1901 included the following names: C. H. Warner, W. C. Ricker, E. Erben, C. E. Nichols, P. C. Hays, C. C. P. Webel, W. G. Smith, A. F. Hoff, E. D. Fry, Joe Watson, O. Hiestand, W. A. Denecke, John Duncan, J. B. Miller, J. M. Hammon, C. M. Robinson, C. M. Hawks, James L. Craig, J. A. Sheffner, W. W. Mokler, F. D. Hammond, W. S. Kimball, E. B. Shaffner, H. G. Duhling, S. W. Conwell, R. J. Allen, W. T. Evans, M. O. Fairchild, W. J. Evans, D. M. Lobdell, V. E. Stutzman, Wm. Jones, John DeVore, Glen Coen, Ralph Galbraith, D. D. Crum, J. C. Rooney, C. C. Johnson, Joe Erben.

New equipment was added year after year, and Casper's fire department was the chief pride of her citizens. On May 3, 1910, a new auto truck was purchased, costing \$4,500, and the people were satisfied they had the last word in the way of fire protection. B. A. Elias was paid \$75 per month for the housing of this truck, and for this amount he also kept a man on duty day and night to operate the truck when an alarm might be turned in. A few years later the town hall was fixed up for a fire house, where the auto truck with all the other fire fighting apparatus was kept, and one fireman was hired to remain at the station. His salary was \$100 per month, and he was given living apartments upstairs for his family.

As the new equipment was added from time to time the duties of the members steadily increased until there were two paid firemen on duty both day and night, and on May 4, 1917, the volunteer fire department, by resolution, transferred all of its paraphernalia and apparatus to the city of Casper, and petitioned the city government to immediately establish a fire department under the provisions of the law for such purpose, Casper having been declared by the governor of the state a city of the first class. There were but seventeen members of the department when this action was taken, and, it seems, that some of the membership were opposed to any new members

being added, for every applicant to become a member received a sufficient number of negative votes to reject his application, and this, no doubt, was the cause of the majority of the members being in favor of the company's dissolution, for the department was reorganized on June 8, 1917, with sixteen charter members.

During this year thirty-five fire alarms were answered by the department, and there was an estimated loss of \$130,200 during the year, which was the greatest loss by fire of any single year in the history of the town.

The last meeting of record of this company was held on December 12, 1918. At this meeting officers were elected for the ensuing year as follows: Chief, Oscar Hiestand; assistant chief, S. W. Conwell; secretary, John T. Scott; treasurer, Wilbur Foshay. The membership when the last meeting was held included the names of Oscar Hiestand and S. W. Conwell, who joined the organization in 1896, and to these two members were given the highest honors that it was possible for the membership to bestow upon them—chief and assistant chief. Although no more official meetings are held, the organization has not dissolved and will not until disposition is made of a fund of about \$2,000 which will be expended for a memorial that will appropriately serve as a reminder to the citizens of Casper that this body of men freely gave their services in a cause where there was no hope of reward except the satisfaction of saving the people's property from destruction by fire.

The city had grown so rapidly and the duties of the firemen were so many that the members of the volunteer company could not meet the demands required of them, and at their request the city council installed a paid department, and the volunteers then retired, insofar as fighting fires was concerned.

In April, 1920, a special committee was appointed by the city council for the purpose of investigating into the advisability of purchasing a La France aerial ladder truck, a 750-gallon pumper, a Gamewell fire alarm system, providing for sixty fire alarm boxes, five police alarm boxes, and two gong signals, the erection of a fire station and a municipal garage, the new building to be on David street, between West Yellowstone Highway and Midwest avenue. The committee, after a thorough investigation, reported that all these things were necessary for the protection of the city, and the city council, by resolution, authorized the purchase of the apparatus and ordered plans drawn for the fire station and the municipal garage, and a bond issue of \$85,000 to raise funds for the payment of the above, was ordered to be voted upon at a special election. At the special election the bonds received a favorable vote and the apparatus was purchased

and the new building erected, and Casper today has a fire fighting apparatus and buildings to house the equipment and the nineteen firemen which are second to none in the state and equal to that of many cities with a population of 150,000.

### SOME OF CASPER'S FIRES

The first fire of any consequence to occur in Casper was on the morning of August 24, 1893, at 1:45, when the house in which Dr. L. G. Powell was living was totally destroyed. Marshal John Merritt discovered the flames and aroused the people in the town by firing six shots from his revolver. The flames had gotten under such headway that nothing could be saved except a few pieces of furniture. The house was valued at about two hundred dollars, and the furniture at two thousand dollars. There was no insurance on the house, but there was nine hundred dollars insurance on the furniture. "It fortunately happened," says a newspaper item, "that Mrs. Powell had arranged to leave for Chicago the same morning, and her trunk, containing considerable wearing apparel, was at the railroad station. She also left some pictures and other things of value with some of the neighbors a few days before the fire occurred." About four weeks later Dr. Powell was arrested upon the charge of arson. The trial was had before Justice A. J. Irwin on October 5. G. B. McCalmont, county attorney, prosecuted the case, and Alex T. Butler appeared for the defense. The trial consumed half the day, at the end of which the prosecuting attorney announced that on account of some of the main witnesses refusing to answer certain questions, because they might incriminate themselves, the prosecution had no case, and in justice to the taxpayers it was useless to hold the defendant to the district court for trial. The case was thereupon dismissed, and in the evening a dance was given in compliment to Dr. Powell and his attorney.

On the night of July 1, 1899, about fifty Casper citizens engaged in a friendly fight with fire works from 9:30 until 1 o'clock in the morning. H. L. Patton started the fight with the discharge of a thirty-ball Roman candle into J. S. VanDoren's confectionery store. Mr. VanDoren returned the fire, but instead of hitting Mr. Patton, H. L. Duhling's store received the full charge, and this brought Mr. Duhling out of his store with an arm load of fire works which he distributed to every man that came along. Mr. Patton and Mr. Duhling and their force of men were lined up on the west side of Center street and Mr. VanDoren gathered a force of men on the east side of the street. An occasional dash was made by a dozen men to the center of the street with Roman candles and close range firing resulted, until

one or the other side was repulsed and retreated to shelter. More than a thousand Roman candles were fired and many of the participants were burned. In time the supply of Roman candles was exhausted and sky rockets were then used as weapons. Boxes were piled up on the sidewalk and from behind these boxes the rockets were fired across the street. The fight brought out a large number of people to witness the display of fire works and the heroism of the participants. In order that the spectators should be thoroughly satisfied both sides finally fired into the non-combatants, and they were chased up and down the streets and alleys until they found protection in some building or made good their escape in some dark corner of an alley. When the fight ended there was not a Roman candle or a sky rocket left in the town, and in order to supply the demand of the citizens to properly celebrate the Fourth, fire works were shipped in by express from Douglas, Chadron and Cheyenne.

The warehouse belonging to the Chicago & Northwestern Railway company in Casper was destroyed by fire at about 11 o'clock in the forenoon, March 14, 1917. Up to this time this was the most disastrous fire that had occurred in Casper, the loss amounting to about \$30,000. Many of the local stores had goods stored there which had been shipped in from wholesale houses. The origin of the fire was unknown.

At about 5 o'clock in the morning January 14, 1918, fire broke out in the plant of the Natrona Electric company and the building and machinery was almost wholly destroyed. Many of the business houses in Casper were heated by this plant and they were without heat or light except that which was furnished by the Wyoming Electric company, who connected the wires and heating plant with their system that same day, but the load was so heavy for this system that the stores and all business houses were ordered not to open before 8 o'clock in the morning and close at 5 o'clock in the evening, and use as little light as possible. The picture shows, churches and lodge rooms were closed, and but one light in each residence in town was allowed to be used. Only the hospitals and newspaper offices were allowed to use the current without restriction. The lighting restrictions were lifted in the business district on February 23, but it was a month later before the residence districts were allowed to use more than one light in each house.

Fire in the Wyoming Electric company's plant on September 5, 1918, caused a loss of \$7,500 to the machinery, but had no effect on the lighting system about town.

The Union Tank Line company's shops on the Midwest Refining company's property about half a mile west from Casper were de-



stroyed by fire at noon on June 18, 1919. The shops were entirely destroyed in about fifteen minutes after the fire was discovered. The loss was estimated at about \$60,000.

The spectacle of a half million barrels of oil blazing forth in the night time from seven huge steel tanks is one of the most magnificent sights that nature can afford. The sweeping streaks of fire, the lament flames, the billows of smoke, black as jet, rolling hundreds of feet high, and through this smoke the glare of the flames, the reflection of the brilliant light in the clouds, the flitting forms of a thousand men working in the tank farm among the many other tanks, where millions of barrels of oil are stored, to save them from being ignited by the seething, fiery furnaces, is a scene of truly terrible sublimity that baffles description. But this was the scene witnessed by more than twenty thousand people in Casper during the nights of June 17 and 18, 1921.

At about 2:30 in the afternoon of June 17 seven of the tanks, located in the Midwest tank farm, on the north side of the river, about half a mile west from Casper, were ignited by lightning striking one of them and the bolt being carried from one to another until the seven large containers were ablaze. There was a heavy downpour of rain, almost equal to a cloudburst, when the bolt came from the sky, but the heavy downpour had no effect whatever on the burning oil. But little effort was made to subdue the flames in the burning tanks, but a thousand men worked both night and day throwing up dykes around the other tanks and keeping a stream of water pouring over them and using every other known means to keep them from igniting.

After burning for about sixty hours the twisted and gnarled piles of smoke-blackened steel were all that remained of the property that represented more than five hundred thousand dollars. This was the most disastrous blaze that ever occurred in Natrona county. In fact the loss amounted to more than all the fires combined that had occurred since the organization of the county.

On July 2 another tank, located almost in the center of the refinery plant, on the south side of the river, was struck by lightning. Fanned by a brisk southwest wind, the blaze jeopardized not only the other tanks in its proximity, but the entire refining plants of the Midwest and Standard companies, whose valuation was at least twenty millions of dollars, were in jeopardy. The flames shooting skyward, the burning timbers from the wooden top of the tank falling into the flood of burning oil, the prevailing high wind, and the tank being full of oil to the very top and the foamite failing to have any effect, were causes enough to lead the officials of the company to believe that the

seven tanks of oil destroyed only a few weeks before, would be a small loss, compared to this one, but in half an hour the wind swerved to the northwest, the oil in the tank had burned down about four inches, and the foamite was effectively used, and then the blaze was under control, and in a short time was entirely subdued, with very small loss.

Another tank, on the north side of the river, containing 80,000 barrels of oil, was struck by lightning on July 13, at about 6 o'clock in the evening. About 50,000 barrels of the oil was drawn from the bottom of the tank and salvaged, but the loss of the oil and the destruction of the tank amounted to about \$50,000. And again on July 18 two more tanks on the north side of the river were struck by lightning. Out of the 155,000 barrels of oil in these two tanks 85,000 barrels were salvaged by being pumped out. The fire in one of the tanks was extinguished after considerable oil had burned, but the other was a total loss, the oil burning for about sixty hours, and during those sixty hours the stupendous sight of the rushing blasts, caused by the rarefied air, roared and whirled forth the flames in impetuous wreaths, the scene of the sheets of flame and clouds of lurid smoke, which, in the night time, resembled the craters of volcanoes, were awe-inspiring and a scene never to be forgotten.

The four fires, from June 17 to July 18, all of which were caused from lightning, resulted in a loss of fully a million dollars, and dispelled the axiom that "lightning never strikes twice in the same place," which, no doubt, originated before there were any oil tank farms.

During an electrical storm on Sunday afternoon, June 18, 1922, lightning struck two tanks containing crude oil belonging to the Midwest Refining company, one of the tanks containing 55,000 barrels of oil and the other 85,000 barrels. They were located on the north side of the Platte river, northwest from the city of Casper, where seven tanks were totally destroyed by lightning and fire on June 17, 1921, just a year and a day previous. The fire in the larger tank was extinguished in a very short time, but the oil in the 55,000-barrel tank burned for an hour or more before the flames could be subdued with foamite. The loss sustained was about \$10,000. Again, on August 4, 1922, at 12:30, after midnight, two thunderous claps of lightning in quick succession struck two oil tanks, one on the north side of the North Platte river, in the Midwest tank farm, and one in the southwestern portion of the Standard refining works on the south side of the river. The crash of the lightning and the tongues of the flames which shot high into the sky, lighting up the surrounding country for several miles, caused hundreds of people to rush from



EIGHTY-FIVE THOUSAND BARRELS OF OIL BURNING



OIL TANKS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING—A MILLION-DOLLAR FIRE



their beds to the scene of the conflagration, for it looked as though the whole of the refining plant would be burned, and it was estimated that fully 5,000 people had made their way to the plant where they could view the flames. The sky was a living red, the flames leaping upward in great rolling masses; the jagged tongues of flames turned the sky into a livid sea of orange and scarlet, and great black clouds rolled up for hundreds of feet into the air, but soon the foamite pumps were put in action and the intense light commenced to sink, and within an hour the glare of light was extinguished and the fire was under control, with a loss estimated at about \$12,000. This brought the total up to sixteen tanks that had been struck by lightning in two years, eleven in 1921 and five in 1922.

### CASPER'S POSTOFFICE AND POSTMASTERS

For more than twenty years the Casper postoffice was located in about the middle of the block on the east side of Center street, between Second street and Midwest avenue, but in September, 1910, it was moved into the north room of the Townsend block on the west side of Center street on the corner of the alley, where it remained until July 20, 1914, when it was moved into the Smith building in the middle of the block on the south side of Second street, between Center and Wolcott streets. Here it remained until May 28, 1916, when it was moved into its new quarters in the federal building on the corner of Second and Wolcott streets.

From seven o'clock in the morning until nine o'clock at night were the hours that Casper's postmasters were on duty during the first ten years of the town's existence. The salary ranged from fifty dollars to one hundred dollars per month, the amount of salary being increased as the town and the business in the postoffice grew. There was but little mail to handle in those days, but the people who received mail felt that it was fully as important then as it is nowadays. In the early days the stockman and the cowboy came to town on an average of about four times a year and when they came they always received the mail that had accumulated since their last visit, or since their neighbor had brought it to them. One man generally did all the work in the postoffice, and in addition to "running the postoffice," he generally had in connection with it a small store, his line of goods consisting of groceries, dry goods, hardware, ammunition, candy and chewing gum, but he always found time to wait on the patrons of the office and all the customers of his store without being overworked.

James A. Hartman was Casper's first postmaster. The date of Mr. Hartman's appointment or the length of time he served the pub-

lic is not obtainable. O. C. Abbott succeeded Mr. Hartman. Mr. Abbott remained until the spring of 1889, but the exact date of his retirement cannot be given. Mr. Abbott's name was always signed as postmaster to the list of "uncalled for letters" that was published in the *Casper Weekly Mail* until June, 1889, when the name of James A. Casebeer appeared as postmaster, and it is not unlikely Mr. Abbott retired and Mr. Casebeer was appointed the latter part of May or first part of June.

In connection with the postoffice Mr. Casebeer was publisher of the *Mail* and was the postmaster-editor until the latter part of May, 1890, when he left his deputy in charge and started on a visit to the Yellowstone National Park, but he never returned.

Oakley K. Garvey on June 1, 1890, was appointed postmaster. By this time to be postmaster was no mean position, for the responsibilities had rapidly increased and there was a slight raise in the salary. In October, 1890, Mr. Garvey received instructions from the post-office department "to qualify in the sum of \$5,000 additional bond, preparatory to Casper being declared a money order office, where postal notes may be obtained for any sum up to and including \$4.99, by depositing such sum with the postmaster and paying him an additional fee of three cents." Mr. Garvey acted as postmaster until September 1, 1892, when Marvin L. Bishop was appointed by President Grover Cleveland. Mr. Bishop attended to his multitudinous duties until August 2, 1898, when Mrs. Ida A. Hewes accepted the responsible position, to which she was appointed by President William McKinley. By this time the business had grown to such proportions that an assistant must be employed, and there was no store in connection. Mrs. Hewes held the position for twelve years, or until September 1, 1910, when James McFadden was appointed. Mr. McFadden resigned January 1, 1911, and Miss Elizabeth McDonald was appointed, and she remained until July 15, 1914, when President Woodrow Wilson appointed J. S. VanDoren. On January 10, 1919, Mr. VanDoren resigned, and asked to be relieved as soon as possible, and on March 1, 1919, W. W. Sproull was appointed as acting postmaster. Frank T. Frawley, postoffice inspector, relieved Mr. Sproull December 10, 1920, and acted as postmaster until May 15, 1921, when Edwin M. Bean was appointed by President Warren G. Harding.

Senator Francis E. Warren in December, 1907, introduced a bill in the United States senate which authorized an appropriation for the purchase of a postoffice site in Casper, and in due time the bill was passed. In November, 1908, five lots, on the corner of Wolcott and Second streets, were bought from Mrs. Lucy Moore and



Alex T. Butler, the price paid being \$11,000. This ground is 125 feet front on Second street and 100 feet deep. The buildings were moved off the land, and the lots were vacant, except for weeds, tin cans and other rubbish which accumulated until the summer of 1914. The plank sidewalks around the lots rotted and were broken in, but the federal government would do nothing toward keeping the walks in repair or the lots free from weeds and rubbish, but the town council and the people who owned property in that part of the town, on account of their civic pride, put in a new sidewalk and cleared the lots of the rubbish at their own expense.

On March 1, 1910, Senator Francis E. Warren introduced another bill in the senate calling for an appropriation of \$75,000 with which to erect a public building on its site in Casper, but this amount was reduced to \$55,000, and on June 25, 1910, the bill was passed, and the act authorized the construction of a building, the limit of the cost being \$55,000. In February, 1913, the postoffice department advertised for bids for the construction of this building on the basis of a one-story and basement building with mezzanine at one end; floors and partitions fireproof; ceiling and roof non-fireproof; stone faced to first floor, with brick above and terra cotta trim and cornice; tin roof.

Bids were received from five parties and opened on April 7. They ranged in amounts from \$56,000 to \$69,295 for limestone and from \$57,518.85 to \$61,750 for sandstone. The appropriation for the building was \$55,000, but the entire amount was not available for construction, as it was necessary to set aside the estimated cost of lock boxes, shelving, etc., amounting to about \$5,000, which would leave but \$50,000 for the construction contract. As the lowest bid received was considerably in excess of the amount available, all the proposals were rejected and the drawings and specifications revised. The revised drawings and specifications called for a one-story and basement building with the mezzanine at one end; first story only fireproof; brick facing with wood cornice. Under this advertisement five proposals were received, ranging from \$52,980 to \$59,845 for limestone and one bid was received for sandstone in amount \$59,952. As the lowest bid was still in excess of the amount available, supplemental bids were invited from the lowest bidder for alternates to reduce the cost. The alternate figures submitted were held by the department to be unreasonable and to have awarded the contract on the basis of these supplemental bids it would have been necessary to make the building entirely non-fireproof, and the proposals were again rejected.

The supervising architect again revised the plans and specifications. Instead of any portion of the building being of limestone or

sandstone it was to be entirely of brick, and again bids were submitted, and in July, 1914, C. R. Inman was awarded the contract for the construction of the building for \$49,785. Work was commenced on the excavation July 21, 1914, and the building was completed and accepted by the government in May, 1916, and on May 28 the new building was occupied.

When the building was first occupied there were plenty of lock boxes and an abundance of room, but within two years it was necessary to put an alcove in the lobby and add several hundred new boxes, and in the fall of 1921 a stairway was cut into the basement and the basement was remodeled for the installation of 814 additional lock boxes in order to provide accommodations for the immediate demands, but with these improvements there is not now enough room and it is not unlikely that within a few years an addition will be put on the building.

Free mail delivery was established in Casper April 1, 1915. There were two carriers then, and two deliveries daily were made in the business district and one delivery each day in the residence district. In 1922 there were twelve carriers who delivered on an average 850 letters and 300 papers and parcels each day. This, however, is only a small portion of the mail received in this postoffice, more than two-thirds of which is distributed into the 1,825 lock boxes.

From January 1, 1921, to and including December 30, 1921, there were 3,500,000 outgoing letters cancelled in this postoffice, and this did not include the 36,000 registered letters which were sent out. During the same period 31,736 registered letters were received in this office. In addition to this wonderful amount of first-class mail handled there were several million packages and papers sent out and received.

Nothing indicates the growth and business that is transacted in a town more than the mail received and sent out through the postoffice, and when the business here has multiplied seven times from 1915 to 1922, it can be safely estimated the business in general has multiplied an equal number of times, and if the population has increased in the same proportion, and it is only fair to presume that it has, Casper, in 1922, would have a population of 28,280 as against 4,040 in 1915.

Not only has the amount of mail that has been handled through the postoffice shown a wonderful increase, but a comparison of the following figures shows that the money receipts have an equally healthy increase: 1915, \$15,819.60; 1916, \$20,349.60; 1917, \$29,612.11; 1918, \$68,274.20; 1919, \$74,197.20; 1920, \$85,200.60; 1921, \$100,869.78.

At the beginning of the year 1922 there were twenty-one clerks, twelve carriers, and one assistant postmaster and the regularly appointed postmaster carrying on the business of the Casper postoffice. The postmaster's salary is \$3,500 per annum and the combined monthly salary of the clerks was \$3,129, and the combined monthly salary of the carriers was \$1,884. The average monthly receipt the first two months of 1922 was \$10,000.

A local welfare council was organized on February 7, 1922, among the employees of the postoffice, with D. F. Gadberry as chairman and Miss Lillian Faulkner, secretary. The council is composed of seven members, three from the clerks, three from the carriers, and one from the supervisory force. Monthly meetings of this council are held at which matters are discussed that have a tendency toward the betterment of the service to the public and the improvement of conditions for the employees, and among other things that have been accomplished by this council were the installation of a new lighting system in the building, the building is kept cleaner and in a more sanitary condition, the securing of a first aid kit for the use of the postal employees, and the lawn around the building was, during the summer, re-seeded and much better care was taken of it than in previous years.

In the fall of 1922 drawings were made for an addition to the original building, increasing the size from 47 x 85 feet to 85 x 110 feet and adding another story to the structure, thus more than doubling the present capacity of the building. The extension and improvements, when completed would include rooms for the bureau of mines and the internal revenue offices and a federal court room. The superintendent of construction of the treasury department in Washington made a visit to Casper in November, 1922, and after familiarizing himself with the conditions, returned to Washington and recommended that the suggested extensions be made, but on account of the "red tape" policy of the government in such matters it will require at least a year to secure the necessary appropriation and make the other arrangements incident to the commencement of the construction work, but on January 3, 1923, the postmaster general at Washington recommended that, among other appropriations, \$350,000 be appropriated for the improvements recommended in the Casper postoffice by the superintendent of construction, and in due time there is no doubt but a federal building will be erected that will be suitable for Casper's needs for many years to come; until that time, however, the patrons must get along as best they can with the present building and the best possible service to be rendered under existing conditions.

## EARLY NEWS ITEMS OF INTEREST TODAY

The following items that were published in the Casper newspapers in the early days are today especially interesting to many people living in this city:

Twin boys were born on January 7, 1889, to Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Faverty. Mr. Faverty was roundhouse foreman of the F., E. & M. V. Railway company. In 1922 the parents were living at Norfolk, Nebraska, and one of the boys, A. C., was living at Nemo, S. D., and the other, A. A., was living at Smithwick, S. D. These were the first children born in Casper. . . Born, in Casper, Wednesday morning, January 23, 1889, to the wife of W. F. Dunn, a daughter (now Mrs. Arthur Schulte), who was the first girl born in Casper. . . Born, February 18, 1889, to Mr. and Mrs. C. K. Bucknum, a daughter (now Mrs. Mark Davis). . . The first real Fourth of July celebration to occur in Casper was in 1889. The program consisted of singing and speaking, and a baseball game between Casper and Douglas, in which Douglas won by a score of 24 to 16. Horse racing and broncho busting concluded the day's program and there was a dance in the evening. The towns of Bothwell and Bessemer also celebrated the day. . . Engineers J. B. Bradley and E. H. French on July 15, 1889, began the work of taking the levels of the streets of Casper preparatory to the grading that was to be done before winter set in. . . The first wedding to occur in the town of Casper was on Thursday evening, May 29, 1890, when Joseph L. Barnett and Miss Nellie Gillespie and J. B. Wegman and Miss Elizabeth Baird were united in the holy bonds. Rev. J. J. Hancock of Lusk officiated. . . The Casper Board of Trade was organized in 1890 with the following officers: W. E. Hawley, president; W. F. Dunn, secretary; George Mitchell, J. J. Hurt, George Weber, A. McKinney and H. A. Lilly, directors; Charles O'Neill, treasurer. . . The cattlemen of Wyoming in the summer of 1890 offered rewards amounting to \$22,000 for the conviction of any person stealing, defacing, unlawfully killing, or altering brands on their stock. Newspapers in all parts of the state claimed "that the cattlemen have made every effort in an attempt to secure convictions for cattle stealing, but each attempt has proved a failure, not for the want of proper evidence, but from a lack of principle in the men who are drawn as jurors. The maverick rustlers and cattle thieves are becoming alarming and the officers should show their ability to control these violations of the law."

The report of the town treasurer of the town of Casper for the current year, ending June 1, 1891, showed the following:



LOADING UP THE FREIGHT WAGONS



INDIANS ON SECOND STREET, CASPER, COMING TO TOWN FOR SUPPLIES—1892





## RECEIPTS

Bal. on hand June 1, 1890..	\$1,147.75
Liquor licenses.....	1,200.00
Gambling licenses.....	1,350.00
Billiard licenses.....	125.00
Dray and dog licenses.....	63.00
Justice fines.....	217.00
Town hall rent.....	44.75
Taxes collected, 1890.....	102.38
Taxes collected, 1891.....	131.03

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\$4,380.91

## DISBURSEMENTS

By general fund.....	\$ 554.36
Salary fund.....	1,525.42
Town buildings.....	2,101.75
Cash on hand.....	199.38

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\$4,380.91

Casper's first brass band was organized the latter part of December, 1890, with the following named members: James Robinson, Alex Weber, W. Melia, W. S. Kimball, C. F. G. Bostleman, C. W. Wixcey, H. A. Lilly, Fred Padden, Major Palmer, L. A. Ross, Dr. Joe Benson and C. W. Evans. . . A boy was born on Tuesday, September 22, 1891, to Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Hogadone at Eadsville, on Casper mountain. This was the first child to be born in the new mining camp and all the miners took a day off to celebrate the occasion. . . The Grand Central hotel was formally opened on Monday evening, April 30, 1894. At that time it was announced that the "Grand Central was the largest, finest, and best equipped hotel in the state of Wyoming and the only hotel in Casper running a bus to and from all trains. When the guests were shown through the building exclamations of surprise and admiration greeted the ear on all sides." . . On August 1, 1899, proprietors of the mercantile houses of Casper agreed to close their places of business Saturday nights at 11 o'clock and remain closed until Monday morning at 7 o'clock. Heretofore, the stores were kept open on Sundays from 8 o'clock in the morning until noon. . . Commencing the first of August, 1900, a daily stage mail service was established between Casper, Wolton, Thermopolis, and Lander. Heretofore, the service was three days each week. . . The mail arriving in Casper during the year 1901 averaged 400 pounds per day. This included mail to Lander, Thermopolis, Freeland, Alcova, Independence Rock, and other towns west which was delivered by stages going from Casper. . . On the 12th of May, 1903, bonds for \$14,500 were voted by the people of Casper for the purpose of building sewers in the town. O'Brien and Rhoades of Denver were awarded the contract for laying the pipe, and Thomas B. Sheppard of Denver was the engineer who made the survey. The contract for the construction of the sewer system was awarded to the above named firm for \$11,137.50. The work was commenced about the first of April. Fifty men were employed and there were fourteen carloads of material. The work was completed on June 2 and was accepted by

the mayor and the members of the town council. This was Casper's first sewer system. . . The Natrona County Racing association was organized on June 3, 1903, capitalized at \$2,000. A track was built near the east end of Second street and a grandstand, judges' stand and other improvements were ordered made on the ground which had been leased for twenty years. . . Christian Twisty, a cabinet maker of Casper, worked eight years on a "palace car," which was completed in September, 1903. On October 4, Twisty, with his wife and child, started for Salt Lake with a four-horse team hitched to his "palace." Flags were flying from the vehicle; Twisty was in the boot driving the team, and Mrs. Twisty and the baby occupied the observatory. The "palace" contained all the comforts and conveniences of a home, but it was so heavy the horses could not pull it over the hills and through the sand, and it was abandoned after travelling about three miles. Twisty made arrangements with Guy Trevett to haul the vehicle back to Casper, and later it was taken to the Trevett ranch, about six miles west from town, since which time it has been used for a bunk house. Two light buggies were hitched behind the "palace" when it was first taken out of town, and in these Twisty loaded his bedding, provisions and his wife and child, and hitching his teams to the lighter vehicles, proceeded toward the setting sun, and he never returned. . . Casper's Commercial club was organized in March, 1903, with a membership of about 150 business men, the executive committee being W. S. Kimball, A. J. Mokler, Patrick Sullivan, A. J. Cunningham, M. P. Wheeler, and W. A. Denecke. J. M. Hench was the temporary secretary. At the first meeting many committees were appointed and there was a variety of sentiment on all propositions for the advancement and prosperity of the town. It was predicted that those present would live to see five and six story buildings on our main streets, the streets paved, a sewer system, beautiful parks, a fine court house and city hall, a fine federal building, a trans-continental railway, and the town having a population of 15,000. The prediction has more than come true and all those on the executive committee, except one, have shown their faith in the town by remaining here and doing their bit toward making it not only the largest, but the most progressive and prosperous city in Wyoming.

#### CASPER'S OLD TOWN HALL AND NEW CITY BUILDING

At the meeting of the town council of the town of Casper, held the first part of April, 1890, it was decided by unanimous vote that it was necessary to have a town hall, and accordingly plans and speci-

fications were drawn by Chris Baysel for a building 25x74 feet. This was to be the first brick building to be built in the town. On April 21 Emanuel Erben was awarded the contract for the construction of the building at a cost of \$1,985. Mr. Erben did the carpenter work and W. T. Evans did the work of laying the brick. The building was finished during the summer of that year. This building was located on the west side of Center street, between Second and First, in about the middle of the block, being on the south half of lot 15, in block 8, having a frontage of thirty feet, and 140 feet deep. A small frame building, or rather a shed, was built on the lot immediately south of the town hall, in which the fire department kept its apparatus. This was on the north half of lot 14, block 8, with a frontage of thirty feet, and 140 feet deep. Later this frame building was converted into a corrugated iron covered building, and was used for the purpose of housing the fire company's property. Thus was the town the owner of two half lots, with a frontage of sixty feet and 140 feet deep, which now bears the street numbers of 132 to 142 South Center.

The town council at its meeting in January, 1895, decided to rearrange the town hall and make a first-class opera house out of it. The stage was to be brought forward several feet, a solid arch front put up and the footlight arrangement constructed after the most approved plan. A new drop curtain and a full set of scenery was to be added, doors cut from the back of the stage and a suite of dressing rooms built on the end of the hall. "All these changes were made," said a local newspaper, "at a nominal expense, and when finished would give Casper the finest opera hall in Central Wyoming." The Casper Dramatic company, under the auspices of the Casper band, was at the time rehearsing several new plays which were to be put on as soon as the stage was ready. This hall, in the early days, was where nearly all the public gatherings were held, such as mass meetings, where the citizens met to discuss matters of public interest; political meetings, dances, church services and school sessions were also held in this building; the board of trade, Commercial club, or Chamber of Commerce, held meetings here that were of vital importance to the business men and professional men of the town; sessions of the district court were held here and many a decision has been rendered by the court, and many a verdict returned by a jury, that meant financial success or failure, and sometimes liberty and even life to a defendant.

The new drop curtain, heretofore mentioned, depicted a mountain peak, a slough, with huge cat-tails along the edge, a large, lightning-splintered tree, and many other things that could be conjured

only in the fertile brain of an artist and produced with a brush, paint and palette. On the border of this unusual painting were advertising signs of Casper's leading business and professional men. What a treasured relic that curtain would be today for our historical society, but like many other things that would now be valuable as keepsakes, but at that time were considered of no value at all, it was cast aside and destroyed. Theater troupes, barnstormers and home talent companies performed on this stage in a manner that brought tears to the eyes of many people in the audience, and sometimes made their blood boil with rage. The tragedies and comedies that were enacted in the old building, by theater companies and otherwise, were many, and it would require pages and pages to enumerate them.

In 1910 the moving pictures commenced to come to Casper, and the town hall was rented for a moving picture house. It was then given the name of the Bell Theatre, because there was a bell in the cupola on top of the front part of the building. Shortly after midnight on the 8th of January, 1912, fire broke out in this building and the roof and front part of the structure were destroyed. The loss to the building was estimated at \$1,000. In the summer of that year the roof and the front were rebuilt and the building was remodeled into a fire house, with offices in the rear where the meetings of the town council were held, with living rooms upstairs.

In 1917 the buildings and the two half lots, which were then considered among the most valuable sites for business buildings in the town, was traded by the mayor and members of the town council for a triangular piece of ground in the rear, or south of the federal building, with Wolcott street on the west and East Midwest avenue on the south. It was proposed by the town council at that time to erect a town hall on this three-cornered piece of ground, and bonds in the amount of \$55,000 were voted in August, 1917, for that purpose, but before the bonds could be sold the city administration was changed, and at a meeting of the new administration on February 28, 1918, it was decided to build the new city hall on the block 300x300 feet square, with Center street on the east, David street on the west, Seventh street on the north and Eighth street on the south, and the triangular lot in the rear of the postoffice was seeded with grass, a little brick rest room was built, a drinking fountain was put in, seats were placed under the trees, and in the summer time the seats are filled with idle men, and discarded newspapers and rubbish are scattered about the lawn, making a real "homey" looking place for the men who spend their time there.

On June 17, 1918, the contract was let for the building of the new city hall for \$76,553.50. The cornerstone for the new building was



WEST SIDE OF CENTER STREET, BETWEEN SECOND AND FIRST, JULY 4, 1901  
 The building with the bell and tower was Casper's town hall, built in 1890. The building to the left of the town hall was Casper's "fire" house, where the hose carts were kept.



CASPER BAND MARCHING DOWN CENTER STREET, 1908  
 Buildings on east side, from left to right: Trevett's store, Norton & Hagens' law office, Tribune office, Webel's store.





laid by the Masonic order on August 28, 1918, and on April 23, 1919, the building was completed, and a thorough inspection and survey of the structure was made by the members of the city council. At the time this inspection and survey was made, the architect, George E. McDonald, made the statement to the members of the council that "he was exceptionally proud of the interior arrangement of the building, and that its perfect construction would be a monument to his architectural ability." This statement seemed to satisfy the members of the city council, for at a regular meeting held on May 5, the building was accepted from the contractors. On the evening of May 29 the new building was formally opened to the public, and a great many people were present, who enjoyed the music of the orchestra, participated in the dancing and partook of the refreshments that were served. Within a few days the building was occupied by the city officers, since which time many defects have been discovered, both in the architectural arrangement and the construction, and it is a monumental botch, at least a century out of date, and the palming off of this building upon one of the most prosperous and progressive cities in the middle west was equal to the transaction wherein the valuable building site, in the heart of the city, was exchanged for the triangular piece of ground, worth less than half the original site of the town hall and fire station.

### CASPER'S ELECTRIC LIGHT PLANTS

"In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness."

Immediately after W. S. Kimball delivered the above quotation from Genesis, on June 12, 1900, at 10 o'clock at night, Mrs. Kimball pressed a button which for the first time lighted a number of buildings and the streets in the town of Casper with electricity. A large number of guests had assembled in the dining room of the Grand Central hotel where a banquet was served in honor of C. H. King and Dr. F. Salathe, who had established the lighting system. The honor of lighting Casper with electricity for the first time in its history was accorded Mrs. Kimball by reason of the fact that Mr. Kimball was mayor of the town when the Casper Electric company was given its franchise.

Ninety guests were seated at the two long tables in the dining room. Those who were present considered this one of the most

important steps in the advancement of Casper that had ever been taken and the banquet was befitting the occasion.

After the room had been lighted by electricity, Rev. J. H. Gillespie invoked the blessing of the Deity on those assembled and upon the enterprise. Speeches were made after the banquet by many of the business men and, lastly, Mr. King gave a description of the plant which consisted of two forty-horsepower engines, two dynamos of 1,000 light capacity and one eighty-horsepower boiler. The building which housed the plant was a small frame structure located where the present plant of the Natrona Power is now located. Light was furnished to about twenty business houses and 150 residences. There were four arc lights which lighted the streets of the town. This company was incorporated September 23, 1908, under the name of the Casper Electric company. The capacity of the plant was increased from time to time as the town increased in growth, and on October 6, 1913, a second company was granted a franchise under the name of the Wyoming Electric company. This company's plant was formally opened to the public February 24, 1914. Both plants were in operation until January 4, 1918, when the original plant was destroyed by fire. New machinery was purchased and the plant was rebuilt. On January 18, 1918, the two companies were consolidated under the name of the Natrona Power company, which now supplies the city with light, power, and heat.

A comparison of the plant when it was first put in operation with the plant in 1922 is an indication of the growth of Casper since June 12, 1900.

The Natrona Power company's plant today consists of a modern steam generating station located on the site of the original plant, and an oil engine plant located a few blocks away. The steam equipment comprises a boiler plant, steam turbines and engines of an aggregate capacity of 1,800 horsepower. The steam for the central steam heating system, covering the entire business district of the city, as well as a portion of the residential district, is supplied from this plant. The oil engine plant contains five machines, with a total capacity of 1,500 horsepower, which, with the steam plant, makes a total system generating capacity of 3,300 horsepower.

The company's service lines cover every section of the city, and practically all of the city inhabitants have electric service available. Over 5,000 electric customers are now served and about 100 customers are availing themselves of the steam heating service. A commercial office and salesroom is maintained in a building adjacent to the steam plant where all modern electrical appliances are obtainable.

## CASPER'S TELEPHONE SERVICE

Saturday, March 22, 1902, the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone company established telephone service in the business houses and residences in the town of Casper, the system established being known as the "Geneseo" type. Forty-nine instruments were in service, but it was announced that the company was assured of at least a dozen more patrons after the system was in thorough working order. The cost of establishing the system was about \$5,500. The central office was located on the second floor of the Stock Exchange saloon building, in one room, about sixteen feet square. The Stock Exchange was located on the west side of Center street, between Second and Mid-west avenue. Miss Elizabeth McDonald was the day operator and Miss Jo Scherck attended the night calls. Each of these operators worked a twelve-hour shift, but they had plenty of time between calls for rest and recreation. There were no outside connections, and consequently no long-distance calls at that time, but work was to be commenced in the early summer on the Lander and Thermopolis lines, and the line was already being built from Cheyenne to Casper, and it was hoped that connections could be made before the end of the year.

The manager of the Casper exchange left with each subscriber a card, printed by a local printing office, bearing the name of each subscriber and his number, together with the following instructions:

"To get central, remove the receiver from the hook and place it to your ear. Wait until central replies, then state the number you desire. Wait until the party answers, then deliver your message. When you have finished talking, hang the receiver back on the hook, with the small end up, which signals central you are through."

By following these instructions the patrons found the service very convenient and satisfactory, and it was highly appreciated. Before the inauguration of the telephone in the town when a business man or anyone else desired to deliver a message or transact any kind of business he was compelled to leave his store, office or shop and walk a number of blocks, and if he was fortunate enough to find his party in, after transacting the desired business and remaining the usual half hour or more visiting, his absence from his own business cost him seldom less than an hour's time.

By the time the system was in perfect working order the dozen more patrons, who had promised to install telephones, had made good their pledge, and with them came a dozen more; with this encouragement the company was hopeful of having at least one hundred subscribers in the town before the first of the coming year, 1903.

Casper and Douglas were connected by 'phone in June, 1902, and the patrons in each of the towns on the first day of the service were allowed to converse with each other as many times and as long as they desired without charge. The Freeland telephone line, which included Bessemer, was completed about the middle of December, 1902, with the following ranchmen as subscribers: J. W. Price, O. M. Rice, Martin Gothberg, Alex Mills, Dan Speas, Denecke & Wright, Rolly Clark, C. N. Richards, G. W. Martin, A. G. Cheney, W. D. Kennedy, Ira Karman, W. D. Blattenberg, Harold Banner, Goose Egg Ranch, E. L. McGraugh, D. and J. Michie, J. G. White, Miller Bros., Cheney's Bates Creek ranch and the Norman Calmon ranch. Two years later the Big Muddy line was established, and then followed a line to the Oil City country.

Casper gradually increased in population, and with this increase came new residences and additional business houses which were supplied with telephones, and in February, 1907, the room originally occupied by the exchange became so crowded with one additional operator and more equipment that the company moved into three rooms in the Rohrbaugh block, on the south side of Second street, between Center and Wolcott. The Geneseo system was discarded and the common battery system was established, the number of operators was increased from three to four, three for the day calls and one at night, in addition to the manager, who acted as bookkeeper, collected the bills, corrected the line troubles, took a turn on the switchboard occasionally and entertained the patrons who called to register a complaint or to spend an hour or more in social intercourse.

The Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone company was merged into the Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph company on July 20, 1911, and the plant at Casper has since been operated under this name.

The town continued to increase in population, more business houses were established and new residences were built. With this increase the demand for telephones increased, and the company's goal for 1910 was 300 instruments; this goal was reached and the 500 mark looked to be not far off. The three rooms were inadequate, more operators and other additional help were required, until there were half a dozen operators on the switchboard, a regular bookkeeper was employed, and there was a regular trouble man, and several line-men and repairmen constantly employed. This was after the oil boom in Salt Creek, when the building of the refinery in Casper had been started, and with this boom came many new residences, professional men and business concerns, and many new telephones were

required, and the company demanded more room for its additional equipment, until the whole of the west side of the upper floor in the business block was utilized. But Casper continued to grow and expand, and in order to keep pace with the town the telephone company required more room, and in 1917-18 erected a two-story and full basement building 45x50 feet on its lot immediately east from the postoffice, which is used exclusively by the company for its business offices, operating rooms, and housing of equipment, with storage and battery rooms in the basement, and the Casper telephone exchange is now equal to any in the state. The switchboard is of the latest type, manually operated board. The multiple system is employed, which means that the operator can connect and ring any line on the board; however, each operator receives calls only from those lines connected to her special position. On January 1, 1923, there were forty operators employed in this exchange, including the lady chief. They work in eight-hour shifts, but are relieved every two hours for a brief rest. A retiring room is maintained, adjacent to the operating room, and this room is supplied with many comforts, including current magazines, newspapers and stationery. Tea, coffee, chocolate and milk are furnished by the company to the operators without charge.

The calls handled through this exchange are a revelation in number. The record for the average day is about 28,000. The busiest period is just before noon, when the average is about 2,400 per hour. The average calls from eight o'clock in the morning until six o'clock in the evening are about 2,100 per hour. There is a rapid increase from seven until nine o'clock in the evening, after which hour the number of calls commences to decrease.

The unusually large number of changes and removals in Casper adds to the burden of the operators. Fully 500 changes are made during a directory period, or every three months. While these changes are in process it requires the closest attention on the part of operators to observe the markings on the multiples, which indicate changes and disconnections, to prevent the ringing of wrong numbers.

It has been and still is a problem in extension work to keep pace with the growth of Casper. Since 1917 there has been a gain of 2,500 telephones, 670 of which came in 1921 and 650 in 1922. There is now a total of 4,170 subscribers using the local telephone service. The company put in \$30,000 worth of new cable during 1920, and more than duplicated it in 1921.

It is fortunate that reasonable allowance was made for future extension when the Casper exchange was constructed, otherwise the company could never have answered the public demand as well as it has, for during the first nine months of 1922 the company completed



an expenditure of more than fifty thousand dollars for equipment, the larger portion of which was used for aerial and underground cables and new pole lines to outlying additions to the city. In addition to the fifty thousand dollars expended during the nine months of 1922, the company built a private leased wire to Teapot Dome for the Mammoth-Sinclair Oil company interests and added three toll lines from Casper to Salt Creek, in addition to which the company installed three hundred additional subscribers' lines on its switchboard before the end of 1922 for its Casper patrons.

Compared with the original plant in 1902, which was installed at an expense of \$5,500, the company's plant twenty years later is second to none in the state, and instead of forty-nine instruments there are now 4,170; then two operators attended the switchboard during the twenty-four hours and now there are forty; then two men took care of all the business for the company, installing new instruments when required, keeping the lines in repair and performing such other duties as were required and now there are twenty-two employed.

A. W. Scott was the telephone company's first manager in Casper, remaining from March, 1902, until 1903, when he was succeeded by J. E. Frisby. Mr. Frisby was succeeded by H. B. Lovett in 1904, and he remained until 1905, and then came J. A. Bell, with his wife and six-year-old daughter. Mr. Bell spent more time on the gambling tables than he did in looking after his company's affairs, and he squandered so much of the company's funds that he was unable to make good his shortage, and he squared the account by swallowing about two ounces of carbolic acid. Homer F. Shaffer took charge as manager in August, 1906, and remained until April, 1909, during which time he made many improvements in the system and the service. E. E. Stone succeeded Mr. Shaffer, remaining until March, 1910. Then came B. H. Engelke, who remained until August, 1911. He was succeeded by Charles A. Cullen, who remained from 1911 until June, 1918. J. Frank Cowan was manager from 1918 until May, 1920, who was succeeded by H. D. McCormack, who is the present (1923) manager.

The company has made arrangements for the expenditure of more than \$100,000 on its Casper plant in 1923, \$20,000 of which will go toward an addition to its building. This addition will mean the enlargement of the present operating room on the second floor and the terminal room on the ground level. There will also be approximately nine miles of new cable, a large part of which will be relief underground cables. These cables will be on East Second street and Yellowstone avenue. These cables will be sufficient to care for a city



with a population of 75,000. A total of \$43,400 will be expended on the cable improvements. Thirteen thousand dollars will be spent on a new telephone repeater and \$13,500 on central office equipment. The addition to the building means that the structure will be enlarged thirty feet to the south and extended the width of the present terminal section of the structure. The telephone repeater serves as sort of a booster station for long-distance calls going through the city. The addition of this repeater means that there will be four in use in Casper. The Casper exchange, with these improvements, will be the largest of any telephone exchange in Wyoming, and on January 1, 1923, had over 1,000 more telephones installed than any other city in the state.

### CASPER WANTED THE CAPITAL

"The trend of events and the progress of the state of Wyoming are such that a change of the location of the state capital is inevitable and imperative. It must come sooner or later, considering the future possibilities of that part of the state farthest removed from the present location of the seat of government." This was the announcement made by the people of Casper in the fall of 1904, when the matter of voting for the permanent location of the state capital was to come to a vote at the general election in November. Casper was an aspirant for the capital at that time, and it was argued that no city in the state had a more legitimate claim than this progressive town; "located as we are, in the center of the state, it is the logical and proper place for the seat of government. Casper is typically a Wyoming town and has the interests of her own state most fully at heart, as has been most clearly demonstrated by the active part which it takes and always has taken in every enterprise that boosts the possibilities of Wyoming. Every voter in the state who has interests of the state at heart should keep these points in view when he casts his ballot. With the construction of two large government reservoirs now under way in Central and Northern Wyoming and with the introduction of new railroads into this portion of the state, we are just entering upon a period of unprecedented development, and it is particularly essential to the best interests of our fair state to prevent the permanent location of the capital from being established in one corner of its territory. Now that the western, northern and central parts of the state are about to become available for the entry of thousands of settlers, it is the prime moment to make this important decision. If Casper does not carry the state this year, even though Cheyenne does not get the majority, it will be years before the question will arise again for the determination of the voters of the state. Meanwhile Cheyenne will

deprive the rest of the state of the great advantages of a central location for the state capital.

"Cheyenne is unfavorably situated on the map for the permanent location of the capital. No one who has the best interests of the state as a whole at heart, and who realizes the great possibilities and the future of the western, northern and central parts of the state will for a moment contend that in so great a state as ours the capital is properly located in one corner of the state, more inaccessible to some parts of the state than the city of Chicago. This is an abnormal and undesirable state of facts. Developing Cheyenne does not develop the state. She is as large as she ever will be. There are no more new fields of industry around Cheyenne to discover or reclaim. It is the old town. For years her chief resources have been principally the legislature and her capacity to get a whack out of every appropriation made by the state. The chief support of her citizens is the town's political graft. Of the salaried appointive offices her citizens hold nine-tenths. Every town in the state has suffered at the hands of the Cheyenne politicians. Cheyenne is not strictly a Wyoming town, she is essentially a Nebraska town, and so dependent is she upon Nebraska that her newspapers look to Nebraska for their chief support. The main object of the Cheyenne politicians in their endeavor to procure the Pathfinder dam, as every one knows, is to secure the benefit of the irrigation of Nebraska lands near Cheyenne. About two-thirds of the water stored in this reservoir will be used, as is well known, in irrigating Nebraska lands."

This and other strong arguments were used and scattered broadcast. The people of Casper were united and they put forth their best efforts to secure votes, but they finished a poor third in the race. Cheyenne received 11,781 votes; Lander, 8,667; Casper, 3,610; Rock Springs, 429, and Sheridan, 122. It was surprising, but nevertheless true, that many of the towns in the central and northern parts of the state voted for Cheyenne in preference to Casper.

But the permanent location of the state capital was not definitely settled, for no town received a majority of all the votes cast. At the meeting of the state canvassing board held on December 21, 1904, it was declared:

"The board finds and declares that no city, town or village received a majority of the votes cast at the election upon the question of the permanent location of the seat of government.

"And Fenimore Chatterton, president and member of the board, further finds and declares that, therefore, no city, town or village has been elected as the permanent location of the seat of government, to which said finding and declaration of the said Feni-

more Chatterton, William C. Irvine, secretary and member of the board, dissents and objects. Leroy Grant, auditor, refused to sit with the board."

At the session of the state legislature in 1923 a bill was introduced in the house providing that the state capital be moved from Cheyenne to Casper, but the bill had not been disposed when this volume had gone to press.

### HORSE RACING IN THE EARLY DAYS

Horse racing was the most exciting and popular sport in Natrona county in the early days. To go on a bear hunt, or spend a week or ten days in the mountains and bag a few deer, elk or mountain sheep furnished amusement and excitement for some people, but a horse race was always the big event that attracted every man, woman and child in the county. There would have been no horse racing, however, if there could have been no betting. The people of the county then divided and lined up for their favorite horse in the race, praised and applauded his good points and displayed as much enthusiasm as they do in this enlightened age upon their favorite candidate during an election campaign. During the first two or three years after the town of Casper was organized these races were between cow ponies and range horses, but in the early spring of 1893 Dan Robertson went to Chadron, Nebraska, and bought a real race horse; his name was Doc Middleton. Doc was famous in Nebraska, for several seasons having won every race he entered. Mr. Robertson did not advertise that Doc was a race horse, but said he was a fancy buggy horse. The Fourth of July was when the big races generally took place, and six weeks before the races were to occur Doc was sent out to the Charles Richards ranch in Bates Park to be trained for the track. The fact that Doc was a blooded race horse was supposed to be kept a secret, but to keep secret the fact that a blooded race horse had been brought into the country was as impossible then as it would be now to keep the people from knowing that it was cold in the winter or hot in the summer time. Besides the owner of Doc, Jeff Crawford and Charlie Richards were his principal backers. Hugh Patton conceived the idea that it would be interesting and profitable to bring a better horse here and enter the race against Doc, and he sent word to Jim Dahlman, who then lived in Chadron, to get a race horse that could beat Doc Middleton and bring him to Casper to enter the race on the Fourth of July. Dahlman went to Chicago and bought a horse named Sorrel John, and sent him to Casper by express with a professional jockey. Sorrel John was in town about a week before

the Fourth, and he displayed speed that astonished those who saw him travel, and the backers of Doc were skeptical about backing their horse for a large amount of money.

A kite-shaped half-mile track was built by Charlie Crow in the then extreme eastern edge of town; the judges' stand, which consisted of a large box, borrowed from one of the stores, was located at the intersection of North Durbin and East A streets, where John T. McGrath now has his residence. The back stretch was between First and A streets. At that time this part of the country was not platted into streets and town lots, but was a rough greasewood and sagebrush flat. The building of this race track was financed by popular subscription. There was no grand stand and no seats of any kind, and no admission fee was charged. Sorrel John was trained and tried out on this track by the professional jockey for a week before the date of the big event, and Doc Middleton was trained every day at the Richards ranch. The purse for the winner was \$500.

The owners and backers of Sorrel John were willing and anxious to wager most any amount of money that their horse would win, but the backers of Doc were not so confident, and the bets they made were in small amounts, but Charlie Richards put up all the money on Doc Middleton that he had and all he could borrow.

During the forenoon of the Fourth the usual Independence day program was carried out, and at 2:15 in the afternoon the big race was to be run. Everybody gathered around the track. Charlie Richards was to ride Doc Middleton against John Tracy, the professional jockey, on Sorrel John. There was another horse, King George, who entered the race, but he had no chance of winning a place unless the other horses fell dead on the track. The time had arrived for the race; all the business houses in town were closed, and everybody was at the race track. Sorrel John won the pole, Doc Middleton was second and King George was on the outside; the horses were scoring up; the expert jockey from Chicago was using all the tricks he knew and was taking every advantage possible; men, women and children were crowded around the track, craning their necks to see every move of the racers. It was a half-mile dash; a man with a snare drum was the official starter; the racers came up to the scratch, but the spread was so great it was not a go; the starter pounded on his drum and the horses returned for a new start; again they crossed the scratch, and again they were called back by the starter with his drum; the third time they came up the starter cried "Go," and they were off; Sorrel John was ten feet in the lead of Doc Middleton, and King George was fully thirty feet in the rear. The backers of Doc and the King protested that it should not have been

a go, but it was no use, the race was on. For the first three hundred feet Doc gained on John, and at six hundred feet from the scratch they were neck and neck; then a shout went up from the crowd; the horses were neck and neck all the way 'round the track until they reached the home stretch, when Doc forged slightly ahead of John; the riders of both horses persuaded their mounts forward and the animals were making a supreme effort to go faster; Doc's throat latch was under the wire when John's nose reached it; Doc won; King George was forgotten entirely; then most of the great crowd of people sent forth cheer after cheer, and it was said that the owner of Doc was so happy that he opened his mouth and forgot to close it, but just stood there taking in the sights supposedly thinking he was cheering with the crowd. There were other races that day, but the big event was over.

Like all sporting events where the game is close, the backers of Sorrel John found plenty of excuses for their horse coming in second under the wire, and they were anxious to arrange for another race. Doc Middleton's backers had now gained confidence and they were willing to risk the reputation of their horse and their money on a second race. A quarter-mile dash was arranged for on the 20th of July and a wager of \$500 a side was put up, in addition to which there were many side bets; Charlie Richards put up all the money he had won and again all he could borrow. This second race attracted fully as great a crowd as was in town on the Fourth of July. The race was on the same track as the first race. Doc won the pole this time and the start was very nearly even; Doc took the lead, but at 200 yards John pushed ahead, but was unable to hold it; Doc soon closed up the gap, and the horses ran side by side until they came to the home stretch, when Doc pushed to the front and scored half a length ahead of John.

Jim Dahlman was a good sport, and acknowledged that Doc was the faster horse, but he said it had cost him more than a thousand dollars to be convinced, and it was his intention to get back his expense money. The gambling tables were in operation in Casper those days, and dealers were on duty at all hours, both day and night; the sky was the limit, and nobody was barred. Faro gave the house the advantage only of the "splits," and those playing against the house could place their bets to their best advantage. Dahlman chose this game to replenish his depleted exchequer; he played from early evening until after midnight and when he retired he was short more than \$1,600. The next day he returned to his home in Chadron. In after years he moved to Omaha where he was more successful than he was in Casper, and was several times elected mayor of that city and was known as the "Cowboy Mayor."



Charlie Richards took Doc Middleton to all the races in Southern Wyoming, and won every race he entered, but in the fall of the year the horse injured himself in some way and Mr. Richards shot him.

There have been many horse races in Casper since that event; we have had much better race tracks, and we have provided grand stands with good seats and a good view of the track, but there has never been so much interest or excitement displayed in any of these later events as there was when Doc Middleton beat Sorrel John in 1893.

#### LOST IN A CLOUDBURST

A tremendous cloudburst occurred on Casper mountain at the head of Garden creek, at about nine o'clock Tuesday night, July 30, 1895, and a sea of water twenty feet deep came thundering down into the valley, carrying with it large boulders, logs, and debris of all kinds, and the terrific force of the current left death and destruction in its path.

Dark clouds commenced to gather over the mountainside early in the evening, and at first there was quite a heavy rainfall which increased in its fury until the terrific downpour lashed the trees and the rocks and the winds buffeted the living creatures along the foot hills of the mountains and in the valleys below, and between the gusts one could hear the wail of the storm-tossed trees and the distant roar of the flood foaming across the lands. In the little town of Casper the sound of the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the downpour of the rain were terrific for several hours. It was fully an hour after the storm had abated before the people of Casper were apprised of the terrible disaster that had been caused by the storm.

A freighter named Newby and his family were camped just south of the CY gate, about two miles south of Casper, and as they were in bed when the cloudburst occurred, the water was upon them before they realized they were in danger. Mrs. Newby and her child were carried away in the flood, but the husband and father escaped by clinging to a log. Samuel Harrison and his family were camped near Newby and two of his small children, a boy and a girl, were carried away. Mrs. Harrison escaped with one of her children in her arms, but Mr. Harrison was carried down the stream over a hundred yards until he caught hold of the trunk of a tree and hung on until the force of the torrent was past. Others who camped in the path of the torrent were E. E. Iiams, Ed Kerns, James Smith, Fred Seely and Frank Arbiter, most of whom were freighters, and their entire outfit was carried away and dashed to splinters on the boulders. Along the



path of the flood was scattered wreckage of every description, clothing, bedding, groceries, pieces of wagons and harness. Those who escaped with their lives were clad only in their night clothes and they suffered a great deal from exposure. The people of Casper, however, furnished them with clothing and food, and in the morning nearly every man in the town went out to the scene of the disaster to assist in the search for the bodies that had been carried with the flood.

The remains of the two Harrison children were recovered along the banks half a mile below where they were camped, and the body of Mrs. Newby was found covered with wreckage, and her baby was found close to the bank in a tree a considerable distance below. The remains of the three children and the lady were brought to Casper and placed in the town hall where the ladies of Casper dressed them and prepared them for burial.

Everything possible was done to assist the surviving unfortunates; they were supplied with the necessities of life; houses were furnished the families; the men were provided with employment and except for the loss of life, it was not long until all had fully recovered from their terrible experience.

### CEREBROSPINAL MENINGITIS

Many children in Casper died from the effects of cerebrospinal meningitis during the latter part of May, 1898, and the people became so alarmed that nearly all the mothers in the town took their children away. On the 10th of May more than fifty children and twenty-five women left on the train for the east and each day following for a week women and children left the stricken town until hardly a child was left and those who did remain were not allowed to venture on the streets and were scarcely allowed outside the doors of their dwelling places. The schools were closed, church services were discontinued, and the homes in the town were left uninhabited except by the head of the family.

In one day more than a dozen children were stricken, and as there were but two physicians in town, Dr. Leeper and Dr. Bennett, they made their visits and administered to the little sufferers during the day and night without rest or sleep.

The disease made its appearance without warning, the first symptoms being pain in the head, fever, and acceleration of the pulse. Purple spots appeared on the surface of the body, the muscles became rigid, the head was drawn back, and the pain was very violent. The patient became stupid and deaf and death supervened within forty-eight hours.

Concerning the origin or producing causes of the terrible disease and respecting the modes of treatment, the physicians at that time knew but little. Some claimed that the disease was caused by the unsanitary condition of the town. The town was at that time in a most unsanitary condition. The local newspaper made a plea to the town council to compel the citizens to clear their residences of all garbage, to remove the cow corrals and hog pens that were maintained in the middle of the town and clear the streets and alleys of all rubbish. The town council acted favorably upon the plea and in less than a month all signs of the disease had disappeared; the mothers with their children commenced to return and by the middle of the summer the children were allowed to come out on the streets and mingle together.

### INDIANS DANCE IN CASPER STREETS

The last Indian dance to be given on the streets of Casper was on the evening of October 20, 1897, by about forty Shoshones on Second street in front of the Odd Fellows building. The principal part of their dress was on their heads and there was scarcely anything on their bodies. The music was furnished by six buck Indians, who pounded on an oil barrel with sticks while all the Indians chanted their weird songs. The dancers circled around a bonfire in the middle of the street. The bucks led the dance for an hour and then the squaws joined in. Nearly every white person in the city viewed the dance and contributed a small amount of cash which was turned over to the Indians. In the early days Indians dancing on the streets was not uncommon. The editor of the *Tribune* at that time described the affair in the following manner:

"One of the most enjoyable and highly entertaining dances of the season was that given by about forty Shoshone Indians in the street in front of the Odd Fellows building last Tuesday evening. Those who participated in the affair were dressed in the grandest style of ball room paraphernalia. Falling Star, the boss buck, wore a crow on his head and a pair of moccasins on his feet and that was about the extent of his clothing. Afraid-to-Ride-a-Horse wore one feather in his hair and a V-cut pair of stockings, very low. He danced the two-step and gavotte schottische in elegant style. Red Cow and all the rest of the dancers wore paint on their bare legs and low-cut moccasins and danced to the sweet music, which was furnished by the Indian orchestra, the musical instrument being an oil barrel turned upside down and half a dozen Indians pounding on it with sticks. As the dance went on, all the musicians sang a song which sounded very much like a dozen cats on a roof in the night time. The bucks kept up the dance till 9:30 and then the squaws joined in and danced around the fire once or twice, after which all dispersed to their respective tents to count out the money that was contributed by the people who witnessed the war dance."



INDIANS ENTERTAINING CASPER PALEFACES IN 1894



## WHEN CASPER WAS A "SUNDAY SCHOOL TOWN"

At the seventh session of the town council of the town of Casper, which was held July 20, 1889, the mayor and councilmen were forcibly impressed with the fact that the time had arrived when a limit must be set for some of the women to parade the streets, visit the saloons and frequent the dance halls, and in the wisdom of the city fathers, at this meeting it was decided that from ten o'clock at night until seven o'clock in the morning should be about right and proper for a "wide open" town where "everything went," and accordingly an ordinance was adopted to that effect, the exact wording of the new town law being:

"It shall be unlawful for any woman to frequent or remain in the barroom of any saloon in the town of Casper between the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., and any woman who shall enter, frequent or remain in the barroom of any saloon in said town between the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined in any sum not less than five dollars nor more than twenty-five dollars.

"It shall be unlawful for any woman to use any vile, profane or indecent language, or to act in a boisterous or lewd manner, or to smoke any cigar, cigarette or pipe on any street in Casper, and if any woman shall use any vile, profane or indecent language, or shall act in a boisterous or lewd manner, or shall smoke any cigar, cigarette or pipe on any street in Casper she shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined in any sum not less than five dollars nor more than twenty-five dollars."

This ordinance was not as rigidly enforced as it should have been, but for several months after its adoption the women whose conduct it sought to regulate did not parade the streets so brazenly as they had heretofore. After ten o'clock at night, however, and until seven in the morning, it being legitimate and lawful for these women to visit the saloons and parade the streets, they exercised their franchise to the full extent and without restraint. Every saloon had its piano, and some of them had two, besides other musical instruments, and the program consisted of music and dancing, drinking and gambling.

The men and women who thus made night hideous for weeks and months, celebrating, as they considered, with proper conviviality, commenced to encroach upon the time set apart for the decent citizens to appear on the streets and visit the business houses, and it was not long until the ordinance was considered a dead letter. Lewd women paraded the streets and frequented the barrooms at all times of the day and night, and the officers of the law gave them a free hand to do as they pleased.

This condition existed until it became intolerable by the better class of citizens, and the grand jury was appealed to to regulate the morals of the town. The first grand jury to sit in Casper was in session in August, 1891, and after due deliberation the jury made its

report to the court, and referring to the moral condition of the town, it was recommended that:

"Appreciating the fact that the town of Casper is a part of Natrona county, and the jurors' attention have been called to the loose manner in which matters pertaining to public morals is allowed to go on and the authorities decline to take cognizance of the matter, believing it to be the duty of the town officials to punish practice of open lewdness within the town, we do recommend that the town officials cause those living in disregard of law to be punished, and that if the officials whose duty it is to bring them to justice fail to do their duty that they put in office men who will, and not try to shift the responsibility."

Accordingly the court ordered that the town officers enforce the laws, but even at its best the town was far from being classed as a "Sunday school town," especially by the tenderfeet who often visited here. These tenderfeet sometimes participated in the "carnivals" for a one-night stand only, and while the carousal was by no means a tame affair, the visitors, in their reports, after they left the "wild and woolly" place, exaggerated the affair at least two-fold and sometimes ten-fold.

As late as 1897 this scum attempted to dominate the town elections, and sometimes they were successful in electing a councilman or two. At these elections the contest was bitter, but the better element each year gained in numbers, and men were put in office who made the laws more stringent.

The "ten at night till seven in the morning" ordinance was repealed in 1898, and the lewd women were kept off the streets and out of the saloons entirely, and Casper then became a "Sunday school town" proper. The worst of the tough element who did not voluntarily leave town were ordered to move. They were given a reasonable length of time to arrange their affairs, but they were forcibly informed that if they were in town after the date specified for them to make their departure, the officers of the law would not be responsible for what might happen to them. Needless to say none of them were ever seen in town after the time announced for their departure, and most of them left, attracting as little attention as possible.

There was one woman, however, who proved an exception. On the date set for her to make her exit she mounted the rear platform of the last railway coach and as the train was pulling out, she addressed the citizens at the depot with the hardest and most blasphemous oaths the human tongue could articulate. The authorities at Douglas were notified to place her under arrest and she was returned to Casper. The heaviest fine possible under the law was placed against her, but the fine was remitted if she would leave the town at once and never return, which she agreed to do, but when she reached her room she swallowed a dose of laudanum with suicidal intent. An



emetic relieved her of the poison, and in a few days she made her departure, but before she went she thanked the police magistrate for the consideration that had been extended to her and she apologized to the peace officers for all the trouble she had caused them, and said she was indeed sorry for having used such vile language before such a large number of decent people. Upon her departure she said she would never return, and if she said anything else, good, bad or indifferent, it was uttered in a low breath.

From 1898 until 1911 the saloons of Casper were conducted along about the same lines that saloons in any of the western towns were conducted. Most of the saloon men here obeyed the law in regard to selling liquor to minors and habitual drunkards, and they conducted their places with decorum, but there were others who took every advantage of the law by selling liquor to young boys and confirmed drunkards; men who became hopelessly and helplessly drunk in their places were robbed of all their money and then kicked out on the street. This, of course, had a tendency to reflect upon the better class of saloon men, as well as those who had no regard for the law, and on March 26, 1911, the town council ordered all the saloons of Casper to be closed on Saturday nights at midnight and remain closed until Monday mornings at 12:01. This was the first time the saloons had been closed on Sundays since the existence of the town in 1888. The better class of the saloon men obeyed this order strictly, as they did all other laws and orders of the authorities, but there were some who persisted in keeping their back doors open and furnishing liquor to all who called for it. As a whole the saloon keepers of Casper conducted their places in accordance with the provisions of the law and commanded more respect than the men in that class of business usually commanded, but the few who violated the laws are the ones who brought condemnation upon all of them and it was also this class of saloon men who no doubt caused the law to be enacted which at midnight on June 30, 1919, put them all out of business in the whole of the United States. There were nine saloons and a brewery in Casper when the prohibition law went into effect. Funds were raised for the building of the brewery during the summer of 1914, and it was formally opened on July 26, 1915. More than a thousand people were at the opening on this date, who were served with "Wyoming Light Lager," cheese and sausages. No one returned to the city hungry or thirsty; the limit of the amount a man ate and drank was his capacity. The opening was such a grand success and the brewery was so popular that the management kept open house during the entire week, and on Saturday night the immense crowd that congregated there voted the opening "a great success, the

management most generous, the beer and eats delicious and the music charming."

The names of the saloons in Casper when the prohibition law went into effect may be interesting in future years. They were: Midwest Bar, Grand Central Bar, The Wyoming, The Buffet, Stock Exchange, Elkhorn, The Inn, Parlor Car, Burke's Place. For several months previous to the closing of the saloons a thriving business in the liquor traffic was done, many truck loads of whiskey, wine, and beer being hauled to the residences of those who desired to lay in a supply. After the first of July a number of the saloons continued business with the same fixtures, in the serving of soft drinks, and considerable business was done by bootleggers who sold whiskey at prices ranging from three to five dollars per pint. When the supply of the bootleggers was exhausted many of the private supplies in the cellars of the residences were stolen and peddled out, and when this was gone the moonshine, private stills and home brew came into existence.

Realizing that the officers would experience difficulty in the enforcement of the prohibition law Governor Robert D. Carey addressed letters to all the sheriffs and prosecuting attorneys in the state as follows:

"I want to impress upon you the necessity for the strict enforcement of the law, and your insistence that the spirit of and letter of the same be carried out from the time that the law becomes effective. As governor of this state it is my duty to see that this law is enforced but it will be impossible for me or any one else to enforce it without your hearty co-operation, and I want to feel that we can count on the same co-operation on your part."

That the state and county officers have made an effort to enforce the prohibition law, not only in the state of Wyoming, but in all the states of the Union, is evidenced by the large number of arrests and the enormous amount of liquor that has been confiscated and destroyed, but when the saloons went out of business at midnight on June 30, 1919, bootlegging and the illegal sale of liquor was commenced at 4 o'clock in the morning of July 1, 1919, and has rapidly increased every day since, and many heinous crimes have been committed and many men have been sentenced to long terms in prison because of the illegitimate manufacture and sale of ardent spirits, and many men have been poisoned by drinking that baneful and noxious substance called moonshine.

### SHEEP SHEARING PLANT

The first steam sheep shearing plant to be operated in the United States was erected near the town of Casper in the early spring of 1894 by J. B. Okie, and associates. At 3:30 o'clock in the afternoon on

Sunday, April 22, the signal was given to start the engine. A large number of sheep owners, sheep shearers, wool buyers and citizens of Casper were present. The local newspaper announced that "Amid much applause, the first sheep was sheared by Mrs. Okie, the wife of the man who was instrumental in initiating this method of sheep shearing to the American people, and Mrs. Okie enjoys the distinction of shearing the first sheep ever shorn by this method in America, and she performed the task in less than five minutes."

### SOME OF CASPER'S HOTELS

The Graham house and the Wentworth hotel, one located on the southwest corner of Midwest avenue and Center street, and the other situated on the southeast corner of the same streets, were the leading hostleries of Casper from the date of the town's incorporation until 1894, when the Grand Central hotel was built on the southwest corner of Second and Center streets by David Graham. For many years the Grand Central was considered the best hotel in the state outside of Cheyenne, and traveling men who were compelled to be in the central part of the state the latter part of the week made it an object to spend their Sundays in Casper, where they were sure of the best hotel accommodations. Many banquets were given in honor of distinguished guests and many social functions were held in the dining room of the Grand Central from 1894 until 1913. By this time the town had grown considerably and there were so many transients coming in that the need of a larger and more modern hotel was recognized, and on April 8, 1913, the Midwest Hotel company was incorporated, with a capital stock of \$100,000, with W. F. Henning, R. D. Brooks and N. S. Wilson as directors. Lots 17 and 18, block 8, on the southwest corner of First and Center streets, were bought for \$19,000. The Midwest Oil company subscribed for \$64,000 of the bonds and the public spirited citizens of Casper subscribed for \$36,000. To encourage the building of this new hotel, which by this time the town was sorely in need of, the town council, at its regular meeting held on May 5, 1913, by a unanimous vote adopted the following resolution:

"Comes now the Industrial club of the town of Casper and asks that as an inducement to secure the erection of a modern hotel building the town council of the town of Casper make some concession upon water rates.

"Resolution was then offered as follows:

"Whereas, The Midwest Hotel company is planning the erection of a large modern hotel on lots 17 and 18, in block 8 in the town of Casper at a cost of about \$125,000.00; and,

"Whereas, The rapid growth of the town of Casper, and the inadequacy of the present hotels have demanded such hotel as necessary to the welfare of the town; and,

"Whereas, Said Midwest Hotel company has appealed to the public for bond stock subscriptions to aid in the great undertaking, and has met with prompt response; and,

"Whereas, The Industrial club of said town has requested the town of Casper to assist in the accomplishment of the enterprise as an inducement to the company to proceed with the construction of the hotel, by selling water to said company at a nominal water rental, as is customary in other towns and cities: therefore, be and it hereby is,

"Resolved, That the town of Casper through its duly authorized officers enter into a contract for a period of five years with the Midwest Hotel company for the furnishing by the said town of Casper of water to said Midwest Hotel company for the sole purposes of the hotel building at an annual water rental of \$1.00 per annum; Provided, That the said hotel company shall at all times during the period covered by said contract as a condition thereof exercise due care to avoid unnecessary waste of such water so furnished under such contract, including the use of automatic shut-offs at all water openings.

"Moved by Councilman Morgan, seconded by Councilman Wood that the same be adopted. Motion being put, same was carried unanimously."

The contract for the erection of the building was awarded to Howard & Wood of Cheyenne on July 23, 1913, for \$59,350. This price did not include the installation of the elevator, cost of architecture, electric wiring, refrigerator system, vacuum cleaning system, telephones or the plumbing and heating systems. Work was commenced on the excavation for the basement on July 31, and the building was finished in April, 1914. Frank J. Donohoe formally opened the hotel May 5, 1914. A dinner was served at 7 o'clock in the evening, at which it was announced that the guests could eat and drink to their hearts' content at five dollars per plate. The dining room was filled with people from 7 until 10, but the barroom was open all night.

Mr. Donohoe conducted the hotel until March 22, 1915, when the sheriff of Natrona county took charge by foreclosure proceedings executed against the furniture in the sum of \$19,334. The furniture was removed and the doors of the building were locked. The hotel remained closed until May 5, 1915, when half a dozen of Casper's progressive men refurnished the building throughout and secured the services of C. W. Adams as manager.

Work was commenced on the excavation for the basement and foundation of the Midwest hotel annex the first part of December, 1916, and the contract for the erection of the building was let to Archie Allison of Cheyenne for \$30,500, which did not include the plumbing, electric wiring, etc., etc. Instead of this hotel being called the Midwest Annex, as was at first intended, it was named the Henning, in honor of the man who owned the building. The Henning was formally opened August 15, 1917. The two hotels were consolidated under the name of the Henning on January 12, 1919, and on March 1, 1919, A. K. Bott was secured as manager.

## GAMBLING WAS A LAWFUL PROFESSION

Gambling in Wyoming up until 1901 was licensed by the laws of the state, and was considered as legitimate a business as banking or any other kind of commercialism, and games of poker, faro, monte and roulette were in operation in all the villages, towns and cities of the state all day and all night. Every saloon in Casper had its gambling paraphernalia, and the games were played on the square; an employee would be discharged if he were caught cheating a patron, just as quickly as a clerk in a store would be discharged for overcharging or cheating a customer. Nearly everybody frequented the gambling places; there were some, however, who did not participate in the games, but they went for the purpose of looking at others play, and they seemed to think no more of it than if they were going to a baseball game. On more than one occasion, when big stakes were up, some of the pillars of the churches and even some of the ministers were onlookers.

The money, large piles of currency and stacks of gold and silver, was stacked in the racks on the gambling tables, similar to the manner in which the money was placed on the counters in a bank. If a patron came in and won, his chips were cashed the same as though he had sold produce at a grocery store; if he lost, it was considered a legitimate business transaction, and no complaint was made. Everybody was considered on the square until he was proven otherwise, and it was seldom that anyone was even suspected of being dishonest. There was one man, however, called Black Dick, a tin-horn and roustabout, who on a Sunday night in the fall of 1890 "lifted" a stack of silver from one of the monte tables in the White saloon while a big game of poker was going on at another table. When it was discovered that the money was gone, Dick was suspected and more of an effort was made by the people to apprehend him than there is nowadays to capture a man who will hold up a woman on the street and rob her of her pocketbook. Dick immediately left town with the cash, but the next morning the sheriff caught him at Big Muddy station when he attempted to board an east-bound train. He was brought back to Casper, and there were some people who were inclined to lynch him, but they were induced to forego this severe punishment. He was, however, tried in court, found guilty, and sentenced to ninety days in jail. He was then taken to Douglas where he served his sentence. Natrona county did not afford a jail at that time and all our prisoners were kept in the Converse county jail. Neither did the state have a penitentiary at that time, and all the state's prisoners were taken to the penitentiary at Joliet, Illinois. On account of the expense of tak-



ing prisoners to the penitentiary there were not many trials in the district court. If anyone committed a crime that would not justify the expense of a trial and transportation to jail or the penitentiary, the law-abiding citizens ordered him out of town and if he did not go his punishment was more severe than a term in the penitentiary.

As evidence of how the people considered gambling in those days, we quote an item from the *Wyoming Derrick* on February 18, 1894: "The town is the liveliest in the state. Business of every kind is good, and as a further evidence of our prosperity there are four stud poker games in full blast. There were two games at the Stock Exchange last week, the game continuing the entire night. A large sum of money changed hands, and there was much excitement."

Another news item which appeared in the *Natrona County Tribune* in 1900 was to the effect that "two tin-horn gamblers in Casper 'loaded' a roulette wheel in one of the gambling houses in the afternoon while business was dull and when there was no one attending the wheel, and in the evening when operations were commenced and after a few plays had been made, the discovery was made that there was something wrong and the men who did the job were spotted. They soon made their escape from the building and left town before the people could deal with them in accordance with their feelings. A man who would cheat at a gambling table is considered the worst kind of a cheat."

At the sixth session of the Wyoming state legislature, held in 1901, the anti-gambling law was enacted. It was after this law went into effect that the gambling tables were moved into the back rooms. The legitimate, or square, gambler went out of business, but the crooked gambler, who would violate the laws of the state had no hesitancy in violating the laws of percentage in the break of the cards, and at every turn took advantage of the unsophisticated player who was inveigled into the game, and if he could not be induced to lose his last dollar at the gambling table, he was generally doped and then robbed of his money, which was fully as legitimate a way of getting it as at a crooked game at the table.

### A WALK TO THE PATHFINDER DAM

It is no easy task for a man of middle age and ordinary weight to walk from Casper to the Pathfinder dam in forty-eight hours, a distance of about fifty miles, under ordinary conditions, but for a man past fifty years of age and weighing 285 pounds to plod over the rough road, under a broiling sun for more than nine-tenths of the distance, and through a drenching rain and heavy mud the remainder



of the way, is a difficult undertaking, but on August 9, 1909, Louis J. Price, whom no one would dispute as to the age and weight, left Casper at 7 o'clock in the morning, on a wager of \$250, and he arrived at the dam at 5:15 on the morning of the 11th, one hour and forty-five minutes ahead of time. A wagon loaded with provisions and bedding preceded him. For the first twenty miles it was easy going and the pedestrian earned about \$10.00 for each mile he traveled, but the second morning out Mr. Price discovered that he had a sprained ankle and both feet were badly blistered, and the going over the rocky road was hard. The scorching rays of the sun added nothing to his comfort, but he plodded on until he reached Alcova, a distance of thirty-five miles. It was late in the afternoon; here he rested for an hour and then resumed his journey, and after going about eight miles he encountered a terrific rain storm, and he was compelled to "lay by" from 8 o'clock until midnight. He had about seven miles further to go, but that seven miles was the hardest part of the whole trip; he was weary and foot-sore; the mud was deep, and the night was dark; he stumbled over rocks, and the gumbo clung to his shoes until he carried several pounds' extra weight on each foot, and the tracks he made in the mud were larger than an elephant would make; his stride was short and his progress was slow; he slipped and fell many times. When daylight came he was within sight of the dam, but for every ten steps he took it seemed as though the dam had moved away twice that distance; he was now counting the steps instead of the miles. He realized the time was getting short in order for him to win the wager and he made an extraordinary effort, and finally he caught up with the river which seemed to be so rapidly moving off in a southerly direction, and then the goal was reached; he had covered the distance in forty-six hours and fifteen minutes, and he laid down on the ground along the canyon completely exhausted. If he had had another half mile to travel he could not have covered the distance within the time limit, and he would not only have lost his wager, but it was the most trying effort of his life, and although his reward was a fraction more than five dollars per hour for the time he had put in, it was the hardest money he ever earned. He was reduced in flesh just ten pounds in the forty-eight hours and the hardships he endured cannot be described.

Alfred Willey, a wool buyer, who made the wager with him, had no witnesses along the route; he said he required none; he was willing to pay over the money if Mr. Price said he had won it, for he knew there would be no cheating; he knew that the wagon was close at hand and he also knew that if Mr. Price had gotten in the wagon to ride that the wagon would have been headed toward Casper and not

toward the Pathfinder dam, and this confidence placed in him was of more satisfaction than the money he received or the gratification of reaching the goal within the specified time.

### CASPER HAS MILLIONS IN AUTOMOBILES

There is not a county in the state of Wyoming and probably not a county in any of the western states that has as many high-class automobiles, according to population, as Natrona county. In the city of Casper for a distance of at least three blocks on either side of Center street, and about the same distance on Second street, parking room is at a premium from 8 o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock at night, and the estimated value of the cars in these six blocks runs up to more than a million dollars. In addition to these there are always several hundred cars parked on many of the side streets.

In the spring of 1908 there was not an automobile in the county. During the summer of 1908, Mr. J. P. Cantillon, the division superintendent of the Wyoming & Northwestern railway, brought the first automobile to Casper. It was shipped in on the train, and upon its arrival attracted more attention than "Tricky" Brown's one-horse cart would attract at this time were it to pass down the street. Mr. Brown was a gatherer of junk in Casper in the early days and his horse and cart and harness compared very favorably with the junk he picked up from the dumping grounds. Mr. Brown was nicknamed "Tricky" on account of his very clever sleight-of-hand performances. But going back to Mr. Cantillon's auto. It was a second-hand Pope-Toledo, twenty h. p. five-passenger machine. The first day it was driven up Center street, the chug, chug, chug could be heard for a distance of ten blocks, and the smoke that emitted from the exhaust could be seen for an equal distance. The noise and the smoke from this "horseless carriage," as it was then called by many, caused every business man and clerk to rush out of the stores and view the wonderful spectacle. The machine turned the corner on Second street east and was driven as far as the stock yards and back, without stopping, which was considered a wonderful feat. To start the car it was cranked from the side, and the cranking process oftentimes required at least half an hour. The favored few who had an opportunity to ride in this machine always went prepared to walk home, and they were seldom disappointed, but the car occasionally came back without being hauled in by a team, for an item in one of the local newspapers recorded the fact that "it has made numerous long trips, among them being a trip to Pathfinder dam and to the Salt Creek oil wells, both places being a distance of fifty miles from Casper."

C. M. Elgin was the second owner of an automobile in Casper. On April 15, 1909, he brought in a new Chalmers-Detroit, thirty h. p. five-passenger car. There were no side doors at the front seat, for they did not put doors in front those days. Mr. Elgin drove this car from Denver to Casper and the local newspaper said it was "a most remarkable trip, driving from Denver to Cheyenne in five hours and forty-five minutes; from Cheyenne to Douglas in ten hours and from Douglas to Casper in three hours, or eighteen hours and forty-five minutes from Denver to Casper. This was the actual driving time, the time spent along the road when the car was not in operation being deducted."

The Nicolaysen Lumber company during the summer of 1909 had shipped in an "International auto buggy," twenty-two h. p. five-passenger. This machine had a forty-inch front wheel and a forty-four-inch rear wheel, with solid rubber tires. One of the astonishingly long trips made with this buggy was in the fall of the year, when it was driven to the Bates Park country, a distance of thirty-five miles, in a little better than two hours.

M. N. Castle owned the fourth car in Casper. It was a second-hand Reo, twenty h. p., and was bought during the summer of 1909. He used this car in connection with his livery business, and it was the first automobile to make a trip to Garden creek, but it was pushed up most of the steep hills. With these four automobiles in town, B. A. Elias considered it a good field for the establishment of a garage and repair shop, and about the middle of July, 1909, he located here, and brought with him a Buick eighteen h. p. car. In August Mr. Elias and Wm. Noonan opened up Casper's first garage and repair shop and to keep the five automobiles in good running order kept them very busy, for there was always one machine out of repair and sometimes the five of them were out of commission at the same time.

In 1910, quite a number of new cars were brought in, and since that time a new car has attracted but little attention, and in 1922 it was estimated that there was one automobile in Casper for every six persons.

Realizing that the automobile tourist trade and good will were valuable assets to any city, the Casper Motor club and Chamber of Commerce made plans in the spring of 1921 for a tourist camp for Casper. With the true Casper spirit it was decided to make this the best camp in the west. Ten acres of ground at the south end of Durbin street was dedicated by the city of Casper for the purpose and a modern camp building with all possible home requirements was built at a cost of \$7,500, by the Casper Motor club. The building is 40x40 feet, equipped with gas, electric light, and telephone. There is

a large screened porch where the guests may eat after cooking their meals in the modern kitchen. Toilet rooms for men and women are equipped with tubs and showers, and a laundry room with tubs, electric washer, and ironing board. The living room is spacious and there are writing desks and a Victrola. A matron in charge looks after the needs of the visitors, gives information concerning the city, and extends to them a cordial welcome to Casper, which they in turn are asked to spread to anyone they may meet along the road. The camp justified itself fully during its first season. Although it was not opened until July 2, 1921, the records showed that to October 5, 2,340 cars stopped at least one night and the expenditures made by the visitors according to their own figures were \$33,362.39, an average of \$14.26 for each car.

During the season of 1922, or from June 1 to September 15, 3,385 cars stopped at this camp, and the tourists spent more than \$51,000 in the city. Every state in the Union except Vermont and Delaware was represented and cars from outside the United States were from Alaska, Korea, New Zealand and Canada. Even with this splendid showing it was estimated that only one in every five cars that passed through Casper stopped at this camp, many of them stopping at the hotels, while others passed through without stopping over for a day. These latter, of course, were not included in the above figures. During the month of June, 695 cars stopped at this camp; in July, 1,076; August, 1,212; September, 402. Seventy-seven different makes of cars were registered. More than one hundred people who were traveling through as tourists became permanent residents of Casper in 1922. Three persons are employed at this camp during the tourist season, a man and his wife, who care for the buildings and equipment, and a man who has charge of the sanitation and registration.

#### AIRPLANES IN CASPER

An airplane soared over the city of Casper at 3:55 in the afternoon of September 29, 1919, with Bert L. Cole as the pilot and Jay Y. Stock, the passenger, this being the first time that human beings had ever viewed the city from the air in a flying machine. Mr. Stock was the owner of the machine, and had it brought here for the purpose of establishing aerial service to the people who might desire it for either pleasure or business.

Although traveling by airplane had become quite commonplace in other parts of the country the atmospheric conditions in Central Wyoming caused the aviators to shun this part of the country. Arrangements were made about ten years previous to this for an

exhibition flight at a Fourth of July celebration by an aviator from Billings, Montana, but his machine never rose from the ground, although a start was made, but instead of soaring in the air the man and the machine skimmed along the surface of the earth at top speed for several hundred yards, and then the machine tore its way through a fence and was stopped after it had entered a large tent, with its wings, flys and steering apparatus so badly crippled that it was necessary to send it to the factory for repairs; consequently when the Stock airplane came sailing over the city it was the first time that many of our citizens had ever seen an airplane in action and naturally attracted the attention of nearly every man, woman and child in the city.

This machine was brought from Springfield, Massachusetts, to Casper, making the entire distance through the air. From Denver to Casper the flying time was three hours and fifteen minutes. It was brought to Casper to be used by the public, and it was announced that passengers would be taken to New York City if they desired, and if they were willing to pay the price. There is no record of anyone having chartered the car for New York, but flights were made over the town with passengers, who paid twenty dollars for a twenty-minute ride. Later, several trips were made to Cheyenne and Denver on urgent business.

This ship was described as being driven by a six-cylinder motor with dual feed and ignition systems, having two magnetos, two spark plugs on each cylinder, two carburetors and two complete sets of wiring on the engine in operation all the time. Both systems were tested out before the plane left the ground on every flight. The gasoline used was of a very high test, a seventy-degree baume being found the most desirable and the lubricating oil was composed of half castor oil and half petroleum lubricant, the latter of very high grade stock. It was said that this ship was better adapted for the high altitude of this region than any other make of plane and was readily capable of making a flight of 20,000 feet in the air. With its fuel tanks full, the plane could stay in the air five and a half hours and make an average speed of 110 miles per hour without exertion.

A splendid landing field about a mile east from Casper was prepared and a five-thousand-dollar hangar was built, which included a complete electric light plant, office equipment and living quarters for the employees. Business was so good that another plane was soon brought in, and it was announced that two huge passenger planes had been ordered, which would cost \$70,000; each of these planes would seat eight passengers, and regular flights would be made to Denver, Cheyenne, Laramie and other cities. These two "Pullmans of the



air" were said to be fitted out like real coaches on the inside. Wicker chairs were arranged in tiers of two, and the seats were placed so that full view was provided of the surrounding country from any one of the fifteen windows in the ship. Each of the planes was capable of making 130 miles per hour.

In view of the fact that Casper had been placed in a predominant position regarding aviation, the city council heartily endorsed the actions of the promoter of this enterprise and at a meeting of the council held on January 4, 1920, an appropriation of \$3,000 was made toward aiding the aviation program and putting in improvements for the landing field and hangar, and it was announced that "this was one of Casper's biggest assets." The appropriation of this amount of money was not approved by some of the city's taxpayers, who complained that the councilmen "sure had the bug," and they said that within a year all the members of the city council, as well as all the taxpayers, would realize their mistake. At this point, it is not out of place to state that the two huge passenger planes which were to cost \$70,000 that were to have been bought, have not, up to the present time, which is early in the year 1923, ever made their appearance in or over the city, and that the prediction made by those who objected to the appropriation of \$3,000 came true before the specified time.

The Western Airplane and Motor company was incorporated in January, 1920, with a capital stock of half a million dollars, and the purpose of the incorporation was announced as being "for the development of aerial navigation in this part of the country, with Casper as the center of operations, and the establishment of aerial passenger routes between Casper and Denver, Casper and Salt Creek, Casper and Yellowstone park and other points, as well as the regular service of aerial sight-seeing flights in the vicinity of this city.

"The company starts with two machines; the 150-horsepower Curtiss Oriole, a 2-passenger machine, and the 90-horsepower Curtiss JN4-D, a 1-passenger machine, both of which have been in use here for some time. The 8-passenger Eagle will be delivered as soon as the factory can turn it out and in this connection the most sensational boosting trip ever staged in behalf of Casper will be undertaken.

"The aviation business, since it was established here has been popular and profitable and its future appears more promising. A big engagement for the eight-passenger Pullman has already been booked. It has been chartered to take a party of ten prominent men to the Dempsey-Carpentier fight, wherever it may take place, in this country, in Canada or in Lower California."



An accident occurred on the morning of January 14, 1920, in which Miss Maud Toomey was killed, and Bert Cole, the pilot, was slightly injured. The pilot and the passenger had been in the air with the machine about twenty minutes, and were about to make a landing when the plane took a nose dive of nearly 500 feet into the landing field. The front portion of the plane was a mass of splinters and it was necessary to tear away the wreckage to remove the body of the young lady, who was yet alive, but was unconscious. As soon as she could be extricated from the mass she was taken to the hospital where she died in three hours. Her injuries were enumerated as having been two broken arms, a broken leg, fractured ribs and a skull fracture, and the fracture of the vertebræ about her neck. Cole's injuries were but a few slight cuts and bruises, and he was in the hospital but one day. After this accident the aviation business was not quite so "popular and profitable" as it had heretofore been.

During the summer of 1920 an effort was made by the Casper Chamber of Commerce to have airplane mail connections established between Casper and Cheyenne and Denver, thus connecting with the transcontinental service arriving in Cheyenne from Omaha, but this effort failed, and the mail continues to come in over the slow-going cars propelled by steam engines.

By this time the thrills of tail spins, falling leaf twirls, fancy spins, loop-the-loop and straight line speeding at a rate of more than one hundred miles an hour had gotten to be an old story, and did not interest the people as they did when the plane first made its appearance over the city, and something new and more daring must be brought forth to create interest and attract attention, consequently on May 20 at 6 o'clock in the evening Pilot Cole and a young man named Frank E. Hansen soared into the air more than five thousand feet, when the machine was turned bottom side up and Hansen leaped out. He dropped through space several hundred feet with the swiftness of a bullet shot from a rifle, and then the parachute opened from its folds and Hansen slowly and safely descended to the earth. More than five thousand people were on the aviation field to see the man flirt with death, and it may be said that all were greatly relieved when the stunt was safely over. The performance was repeated time and again until the evening of July 2, when an ascension of 4,400 feet was made and Hansen leaped out with his parachute. The parachute opened as usual but almost immediately collapsed. The aviator saw the parachute collapse, and knowing that it meant sure death to his companion, he veered his ship into a sharp dive and made an effort to intercept the falling man. The plane shot beneath Hansen, the aviator attempting to get under him so that he might land on the

wings of the plane, but Hansen missed the ship by about twenty feet and when he struck the ground it was with such force that his body was half buried in the earth. His right side was crushed and mangled to a pulp and it was said that every bone in the man's body was broken except the upper bone in the right arm and the bone in the right thigh. This accident, together with the one when Miss Toomey lost her life, lessened the enthusiasm of those who had a desire to fly, and although one of the planes made ascents nearly every day during the remainder of the summer months there were but few passengers who went up. During the winter months the planes remain in the hangar, but are brought out occasionally during the summer, but they are not nearly so popular as they were when they first made their appearance over the city.

During the summer of 1922 an airway service was established between Casper and Salt Creek, trips being made in the airplane on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, but this mode of travel was not popular with the public, and proved unprofitable for the company and was soon abandoned.

On August 11, 1922, aerial photographs of the Salt Creek and Teapot oil fields were taken by government representatives. Flying at a height of ten thousand feet and at a rate of eighty-five miles an hour an exposure was made of the oil fields every twenty-nine seconds. It required seven days for the aviator and the photographer to complete the work, which resulted in securing a series of overlapping pictures, which when trimmed made one large photograph of the fields. The camera used was the same as those used in war times, and was almost entirely of aluminum, weighing approximately thirty pounds. The machine was fastened securely to the plane and was operated with a trigger, similar to the trigger on a machine gun.

#### CASPER'S WIRELESS TELEGRAPH SYSTEMS

The first wireless telegraph system to be established in Natrona county was erected in 1916 by Major Ormsby. The aerial wires were strung above his residence property on Center street, between Sixth and Seventh streets. Another system was established at his Spearhead ranch in Converse county, more than fifty miles distant, and a great many messages were sent and received from these two stations. Another system was erected the same year near the Burlington passenger station by one of the telegraph operators and was used merely to pick up any messages that came through the air waves. During the world war in 1917 the government required these systems to be dismantled and they were not again put in operation, and no more

wireless systems were established in the city until 1922, when more than two dozen radiophones were installed. Some were put in private homes and others were put in stores for the entertainment of the public, and others were put in club rooms for the entertainment and enlightenment of the members. The *Daily Tribune* had one installed in its office for its convenience and entertainment, but the largest system in the city was erected during the month of August, 1922, by the Illinois Pipeline company, which is used to receive and send private messages to Lima, Ohio, the headquarters of the company. The aerial wires are strung from two 150-foot steel towers, which are 500 feet apart. The wave length of this system is 1,685 meters, and the sending and receiving radius of the instrument is 2,000 miles. This is the largest system in the western states, excepting several government stations on the Pacific coast.

#### ASSESSED VALUATION OF CASPER PROPERTY

The assessment of the town of Casper and Natrona county was made separately from 1891 to 1913. During those years the town clerk acted as town assessor, and in 1891 the town's assessed valuation was \$80,459; in 1895 it had increased to \$231,486.50; and with each succeeding year there was a substantial increase which is shown as follows: Nineteen hundred, \$300,511; 1901, \$396,217; 1903, \$411,088; 1907, \$628,508; 1910, \$1,685,657; 1913, \$2,456,831. An increase of more than twenty-two and one-half million dollars was made in the assessed valuation of the property in Casper in the succeeding eight years, the exact figures for 1921 showing the assessed valuation to be \$24,810,371, and in 1922 the assessed valuation of the city was \$26,886,062.

## Retrospective and Prospective View of Casper

**T**HIRTY-FOUR years—from 1888 to 1922—is not a very long time for the building up of a city with an assessed valuation of twenty-seven million dollars and the home of twenty-seven thousand people—one thousand dollars for each and every man, woman and child in the city; the largest, the most progressive and the most prosperous city in Wyoming. This twenty-seven million dollars' assessed valuation does not include nearly four million dollars worth of property in the name of the city, nor does it include the property in the name of Natrona county, and it is only fair to presume that the assessed valuation is not more than two-thirds of the full valuation of the property, therefore to say that there is more than forty million dollars' worth of property in Casper belonging to the taxpayers, the city of Casper and Natrona county would be putting it at an exceedingly low figure.

On the 1st of June, 1888, the tract of land now occupied by the city of Casper, with its hundreds of business houses, thousands of dwellings and many large manufacturing establishments, was but a barren waste of sand, sage brush and cactus; not a house, or a tent or a living soul occupied the land at that time; even the cattle did not linger long here, on account of the unproductiveness of the soil. The roaring of the wind during the day and the yelping of the coyote during the night were then the only signs of action on these bleak plains. But it was at about this time that John Merritt rode into the valley on horseback, and he camped along the river bank; he was the sole resident of Casper for nearly a week, then on the 7th of June came C. W. Eads, with his daughter Fannie, his son Kise, and Abe Nelson and John Johnson. They put up the first tent on the ground; John Merritt had slept in a round-up bed until they came. The next day after Mr. Eads and his party arrived a number of others came in and each succeeding day brought in many others, and before the middle of the month there were about one hundred people here. The Chicago & Northwestern Railway company reached this point with its branch line on the 15th of June, and before the end of the month another hundred residents had been added to the town. This "tent town" was situated about three-fourths of a mile east from where the Natrona



CENTER STREET, CASPER, 1890



SAME STREET IN 1900



SAME STREET IN 1922





county court house is now located. Where the town was to be permanently located had not yet been platted or surveyed, and this work was not completed until late in October, after which the town lots were sold, and in November of that year the work of moving the buildings down from the temporary location and the construction of new buildings on the permanent location was commenced.

On the 9th of April, 1889, John Merritt made application to the board of county commissioners of Carbon county (Natrona had not yet been organized) to have the town of Casper incorporated, and on the 8th of July, 1889, the first mayor and councilmen were elected.

The business lots in the town were 25 x 100 feet and the residence lots were 60 x 140 feet. The corner lots in the business section sold for \$250 and the inside lots sold for \$200, while the residential corner lots sold for \$125, and the inside lots brought \$100. In 1895 the prices on these lots were doubled, and in 1909 the prices of the residential lots were raised again, to \$300 and \$375; all the business lots had by this time been sold by the townsite company. In 1912 another raise was made in the prices to \$500 and \$650, and again in 1917 the prices went up to \$1,000 and \$1,250. Many new additions and subdivisions to the town had been made and the lots that were being sold at the above prices were quite a distance from the business section of the town, and in 1922 the prices on these lots had increased to \$4,000 and \$5,000. With the phenomenal upbuilding of the town and prospects for a bright future the city of Casper at the beginning of the year 1923 offers unbounded opportunities for the investor of capital, for the home owner and for industries of many kinds. Ideally situated at the foot of Casper mountain, in the North Platte river valley, and almost in the geographical center of the state, it is the metropolis of an industrial empire.

The city now boasts of a business district extensive in scope and metropolitan in arrangement. Its extensive residence district spreads over many broad acres. Beautiful business buildings and homes are monuments of tribute to the foresight of the pioneers.

During the past five years Casper, it is estimated, has spent approximately \$20,000,000 in transforming its outward appearances exclusive of approximately the same sum spent by the oil refineries that are located here.

Casper's unique location, as outlet of the Lander valley and the Big Horn basin has made it the jobbing center of Central Wyoming. This field is scarcely tapped yet but the advent of huge jobbing houses here, already in existence and contemplated, will entrench Casper's position during the coming years.

Casper is also a division point of the Burlington and Northwestern railroads and averages yearly greater freight tonnage, due principally to oil shipments, than many of the great industrial cities of the country. The freight earnings of these two railroads during the year 1922 was more than twenty-two million dollars.

Casper supports a packing plant which has an employing capacity of 100 persons. The Natrona Power company furnishes electric service both power and lights at a moderate rate. The plant investment of the company here approximates \$1,000,000.

Casper has an approximate valuation of \$40,000,000. It is the capital of Natrona county which has an assessed valuation of \$61,000,000, all of which is tributary to Casper and finds its outlet in this city.

It is the home of the best school system in the state of Wyoming and many modern buildings, including seven modern grade school buildings, a general high school and a new vocational high school, which represents investment of over \$2,000,000, are operated here. Bonds in the amount of \$500,000 were voted by the district in the summer of 1922 for the construction of another high school building.

During 1920 and 1921 Casper spent approximately \$2,500,000 in municipal improvements including extension of water and sewer systems to provide adequate protection and service to every section of the city.

Casper is now one of the most important cities of two automobile highways, the Grant Memorial highway which extends from Chicago to Portland, Oregon, and the Yellowstone highway which is looped with the Park to Park highway, affording continuous avenue to visit all national parks in the western country.

Nearly every religious denomination is represented in Casper. All sects have erected handsome new structures or contemplating erection of new homes during the coming year.

Blessed with an adequate supply of water furnished by the North Platte river and the smaller streams from the mountains, with central location, facility for advancement, abundance of natural gas for fuel and with the spirit of progress, the accomplishments of the past will soon be outstripped by the undertakings of the future.

The Casper-Alcova irrigation project which contemplates opening up 125,000 acres of land tributary to Casper, is a matter of future accomplishment. Government surveys have shown the project feasible. Adequate supply of water is contained in the Pathfinder dam to transform the district covered from an arid stock grazing land into an area which will afford homes for potential thousands.

At the session of congress in December, 1922, the estimates of appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1924, submitted by the bureau of the budget, among the interior department items, was \$1,420,000 for this project. It may be several years before this project is completed, but it will surely come, then these 125,000 acres of irrigated fertile soil will supply sugar beets for a factory to be located in Casper with an annual production of 16,000 tons of sugar. The pulp derived from 110,000 tons of raw beets, which should be the average annual production for 11,000 acres of beets, will fatten 6,875 two-year-old steers every season. This will enable the cattle men to fatten their own range stock for market at minimum cost. Sugar beet pulp is also excellent feed for fattening sheep, of which we have 225,000 in Natrona county.

Fifty thousand acres of alfalfa averaging three tons to the acre, 150,000 tons annually, will provide hay for thousands of cattle and sheep and thus permit the Natrona county ranchman to pick his own market and avoid seasonal marketing which has always been a serious handicap to Wyoming ranchmen. Our alfalfa is unexcelled for the making of alfalfa meals and stock foods.

Fifteen thousand acres of small grains will produce a crop of 250,000 bushels of wheat, 41,000 bushels of oats, 18,000 bushels of rye, 37,000 bushels of barley annually. The wheat will supply a flour mill in Casper having 108 barrels daily capacity and most of the other grains will be fed to stock by the farmer.

Five thousand acres of potatoes should yield annually an average of 750,000 bushels, enough to feed the city of Casper and operate a starch factory with an annual output of 5,625,000 pounds of starch.

Four thousand acres of corn should produce an average annual yield of 100,000 bushels of corn, or 28,000 tons of ensilage. Twenty-eight thousand tons of ensilage will winter 3,000 head of dairy cattle and 13,660 head of beef cattle.

This wealth and these industries will be incentives for other capital and other industries to locate here, and then Casper will be to Wyoming what Denver is to Colorado.

In the accomplishments of the past and the undertakings of the future, the strong financial institutions of Casper have played and will play an important role. During the past year these institutions cleared in excess of \$50,000,000. The banking institutions of Casper have kept pace with the city.

Casper's Chamber of Commerce, boasting of 1,300 members and the largest per capita membership of any city in the country, has done much to foster the growth of the city and assist in its upbuilding during the past few years.

In 1922 the city of Casper showed a two-million-dollar increase in property assessed valuation over 1921. In 1921, Casper's assessed property valuation was \$24,810,371 and in 1922 it was \$26,886,062. This increase was made despite the fact that all valuations on improvements were cut 10 per cent.

A comparison of the inventories of the property belonging to the city of Casper on January 1, 1912, and on January 1, 1922, a period of ten years, is of special interest. The 1912 inventory showed:

	1912
Water works, reservoirs, etc.	\$ 96,349.55
Sewer works, manholes, etc.	39,610.88
Horses, wagons, harness, etc.	1,600.00
Miscellaneous merchandise, etc.	5,265.20
Contents of jail, cells, etc.	690.85
Lots where jail stands	2,500.00
Jail building, residence, barns and corral.	3,000.00
Town Hall lots	6,000.00
Town Hall, hose house and sheds	2,500.00
Safe	75.00
Fire fighting apparatus, furniture, etc.	8,174.00
Unused portions of books, records, etc.	100.00
Water right	6,000.00
Parks in Park addition	7,000.00
Parks in Capitol Hill	2,000.00
Park at library	500.00
Trees on streets	5,000.00
Cemetery	10,000.00
Cross walks 1½ miles	7,000.00
Sidewalks, 6 miles of 6 feet, 1 mile 12 feet	28,000.00
Value of streets and alleys	175,000.00
Value of right of way, water ditch, etc.	10,000.00
Total value of property	\$416,365.48

The 1922 inventory gave nearly three and three-quarter million dollars, as follows.

	1922
Public buildings and equipment, including grounds	\$ 321,846.63
Water works system	704,238.44
Sidewalks, curbing, alleys and street crossings	347,535.60
Paving, including grading	1,636,674.90
Sewer and drainage system	444,794.35
City park, block 31	75,000.00
Lots 14 and 15, block 4 (Postoffice park)	25,000.00
Park in White's addition, block 46	15,000.00
Corner Park and Second streets, 2,435 square feet	4,000.00
Equipment of City park	809.68
Equipment of Postoffice park	3,021.50
Real estate, south half of northeast quarter, north half of southeast quarter, section 10	70,000.00
Cemetery equipment, on above property	311.60
Fire department equipment	47,690.00
Police department equipment	7,830.00
Street department equipment	11,895.00
Engineering department equipment	6,766.40
Gamewell fire alarm system	19,916.83
Total value of property	\$3,742,286.43

The balance sheet at the beginning of business January 1, 1922, for the city showed the following assets:

Cash on hand and in bank.....	\$153,655.02	
Less special improvement funds.....	<u>41,392.11</u>	\$ 112,262.91
Taxes 1921, due and unpaid.....		300,205.49
Public improvements.....		3,455,044.92
Park system and improvements.....		122,831.18
Cemetery property.....		47,911.60
Departmental equipment.....		<u>94,098.73</u>
Total .....		\$4,132,354.83
The liabilities were:		
General fund warrants outstanding.....	\$ 38,665.85	
Water fund warrants outstanding.....	2,592.34	
Bonds outstanding.....	<u>1,612,000.00</u>	\$ 1,653,258.19
Net worth of City.....		<u>2,479,096.64</u>
Total .....		\$4,132,354.83

Sixty-four thousand square yards of street paving were laid in the city of Casper during the year 1922. The paving of streets in Casper has added a great deal to the scenic beauty of the city as well as being of great convenience to all. Plans for paving during 1923 will cover fully as many yards as were covered in 1922, and it is expected within a few years most of the streets within the city limits will be paved.

With Casper's splendid fire department and fire-fighting equipment, the city is equally well protected with a competent police department, as will be shown by the number of arrests made during 1921 and 1922 and the fines collected: There were 1,956 arrests made in 1921, with fines amounting to \$38,861.50. In 1922, 2,991 people were arrested, and \$33,613 in fines were collected, and in addition to this amount there were \$3,450 in fines which were satisfied through the serving of sentences in the city jail. Charge of intoxication, bootlegging, traffic violations and disturbances of the peace headed the list. In addition to the arrests made by the city police department, there were 529 arrests made during 1922 by the sheriff's office of Natrona county. The crimes committed show a wide scope, ranging from murder to shoplifting. Violations of the liquor law predominated with 161; fifty-five were arrested for gambling; thirty-four for stealing automobiles; eight I. W. W.'s were arrested; three for attempted murder and two for murder, and one for confidence operations and one for embezzlement.

The vital statistics for Casper shows an amazing increase in population, in buildings, water and sewer mains, the paving of streets,

building of sidewalks, postoffice facilities, electric light, power and gas accounts, as follows:

Population — 1890, 544; 1900, 883; 1910, 2,639; 1915, 4,040; 1920, 11,447; 1922, \*24,597; 1923, \*27,309.

Building Permits — 1919, 229 permits, cost of buildings, \$1,232,334; 1920, 574, \$1,950,110; 1921, 969, \$2,104,340; 1922, 985,096.

Water and Sewer Mains, Paving — The city of Casper on January 1, 1923, had forty-seven miles of water mains, ranging in size from 4-inch distributing mains to 14-inch trunk lines; more than twenty miles of bitulithic and concrete street paving; thirty-four miles of 8, 10, 12 and 15-inch sanitary sewers, and fourteen miles of 8 to 72-inch storm sewers.

The Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph company on January 1, 1923, had 4,170 telephones in operation in Casper.

Power, Light and Gas — The Natrona Power company had 5,400 service accounts on January 1, 1923; and the New York Oil company had 740 gas service accounts April 1, 1921; 1,800 October 1, 1921; 2,700 April 1, 1922; 3,450 October 1, 1922, and 4,030 January 1, 1923.

\* Estimated on basis of increase in school census from 1920 to 1922 and 1923.





SECOND STREET, CASPER, LOOKING EAST FROM CENTER STREET, 1922



## The Schools of Natrona County

NINETEEN pupils were enrolled in the subscription school taught in Casper by Mrs. Adah E. Allen, which was commenced on Monday, March 5, 1889, and ended the middle of April. This was the first school conducted in Casper. Mrs. Allen came to Casper the latter part of February from Lusk with the intention of going to Ervay to teach school at that place, but the citizens of Casper induced her to remain here. Concerning the opening of the school, the *Casper Mail* of March 8 said: "Mrs. Allen commenced a subscription school last Monday. The outlook is good for a successful term, although there is great need of more room and conveniences for the pupils. The children all seem bright and will doubtless appreciate the privilege afforded them. One of Casper's needs at present is a school house." In the same issue of the newspaper, Mrs. Allen called attention to the fact that, "Those persons who so kindly agreed to donate toward a private school will please leave the amount with Mr. C. C. Wright at the postoffice and receive credit for the same," and in the issue of April 18, Mrs. Allen announced that, "The citizens of Casper and vicinity will please accept my sincere thanks for the many favors received and for their support toward the private school." There is no record of the school closing at this time, but the above would indicate that her term had ended, inasmuch as she had thanked the people for the favors and support they had given her.

The first act toward the establishment of a public school in Casper was at a meeting held March 28, 1889, for the organization of school district No. 33, in Carbon county (now Natrona). At this meeting the following trustees were elected: C. W. Eads for the short term, or until May, 1890; Joshua Stroud, for the middle term, or until May, 1891; and P. A. Demorest, for the long term, or until May, 1891. Mr. Demorest was elected president of the board and Mr. Eads secretary. An official call was made for a meeting of the board as follows: "Notice of annual school meeting of district No. 33, in Carbon county, is called by Charles W. Eads, clerk, to meet at the store of N. S. Bristol & Co., at 1 o'clock, the 6th day of May, 1889, to transact such business as may properly come before said meeting."

No record can be found of the meeting held on the above date, but it is evident that at this meeting provisions were made for a teacher and for the rental of a building suitable for school purposes,

for the first public school in the village of Casper was opened on Monday, July 8, 1889, in the Congregational Tabernacle, with Miss Anna Weber (later Mrs. W. A. Denecke) as teacher. The tabernacle was on the southeast corner of Durbin street and Third avenue (now First street) where the New York Oil company's offices are located. A picture of this building is published elsewhere in this volume. Miss Weber had charge of the school until the middle of April, 1890, when she resigned. Mr. M. P. Wheeler, who had recently come to Casper from Johnstown, Nebraska, was engaged to finish the term, and he had charge of the school for ten weeks after April 22. In the first issue of the *Wyoming Derrick*, May 21, 1890, announcement was made that "The enrollment of the Casper schools is an even 50. Principal M. P. Wheeler started in less than three weeks ago with an attendance of only 26. He is evidently the right man in the right place, and if he continues the work he has so ably begun, Casper can soon boast of the best schools in Central Wyoming." Mr. Wheeler received \$75 per month for his services, or a total of \$187.50 for the ten weeks' work.

It is evident that at the meeting of the school board held on May 6, 1889, the number of the district was changed from 33 to 14, and that a new member of the board was elected, for an official notice published in the *Casper Mail* October 11, 1889, which is the first record of any meeting that can be found since May 6, is as follows: "Proposals will be received until October 15, 1889, for the erection of a school house in school district No. 14, town of Casper, county of Carbon, according to plans and specifications now on file at the Bank of Casper.

"Casper, Wyoming, October 3, 1889.

"C. C. Wright, clerk.

"P. A. Demorest, president."

The business transacted at the meeting held on October 15 is also a conjecture, for no more records appear until after Natrona county was organized, on April 12, 1890, but it is known that the proposed school house was not built, for the Congregational Tabernacle was used for school purposes until the 1889-1890 term was finished by Miss Weber and Mr. Wheeler.

School district No. 2 was formed by Cordelia M. Cheney, county superintendent of schools, on May 7, 1890, four weeks after the organization of Natrona county. The boundaries of this district were nearly the same as the boundaries of original district No. 33, which was afterwards changed to district No. 14. Mrs. Cheney designated May 19, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, as the time for the electors of this district to elect three trustees. G. E. Butler was chairman and

John McGrath acted as secretary at the election. H. A. Lilly was elected trustee for one year; Charles O'Neill, two years; George Weber, three years. These trustees met at the office of the *Casper Mail* on May 20 when Charles O'Neill was elected director; George Weber, treasurer; H. A. Lilly, clerk. At this meeting \$630 was appropriated for a school house fund, \$630 for teachers' fund, and \$100 for a library fund.

The next meeting of the trustees was held at the Bank of Casper on May 23, when a call was issued for a special election to be held on Monday, June 30, 1890, to vote upon the proposition of bonding the district in the sum of \$4,000 for the purpose of securing funds with which to erect "a handsome, commodious, and creditable brick school house." Eighty-seven votes were cast for the bonds and none against. Joel L. Hurt bought these bonds, but before he would accept them and turn over the money, twenty men of Casper signed a note guaranteeing to pay back the money if the school district was in such financial distress when the bonds became due that it could not meet its obligation. The bonds were promptly taken up by the school district when they became due. Mr. Weber resigned as a member August 9, and on August 19, J. J. Hurt was elected to fill the vacancy.

Advertisements for bids for the building of the new school house were published in August and bids were received on September 6, 1890. Messrs. Erben and Merrian were awarded the contract, the price being \$4,225. Chris Baysel was the architect. Work was commenced at once and the building, consisting of four rooms, was to be completed by November 15. The new building was described as being "two stories high, with a tower twelve feet square, projecting six feet outside and six feet inside the building, forty-eight feet in height. The floor arrangement is the same in each story, there being two school rooms on each floor, each 23 x 30 feet, and also two recitation rooms 16 x 16 feet. Only two rooms are required at this time and only the upper rooms will be finished until the lower rooms are needed." The two rooms were not ready for occupancy until January 20, 1891. The lower rooms in the building were not finished until the fall of 1894. The bondsmen for the contractors were required to pay to the school district the sum of \$620.62, on account of the building not being finished at the time specified, but this money was afterwards paid back to the bondsmen by the school district.

School was commenced in the new building on January 20, 1891, with an attendance of fifty pupils. J. C. Williams was principal, and Miss Clementine Evans (now Mrs. P. C. Nicolaysen) was assistant. The largest number of pupils in attendance during the term was twenty-six in Mr. Williams' room and thirty-six in Miss Evans'

room. The term closed on June 26, with the usual last-day-of-school exercises. Mr. Williams received a salary of \$70 a month and Miss Evans received \$50 a month.

At the annual election held on May 4, 1891, E. A. Johnson was elected trustee to succeed H. A. Lilly, whose term of office expired. Mr. Johnson was elected clerk. Miss Ryan of Buffalo was engaged to teach room A, and Miss Franc Butler, (now Mrs. Franc Sheffner) had charge of room B, during the 1891-2 term. Miss Ryan resigned early in the term and Mr. George Fallan finished the term. Mr. R. L. Carpenter and Miss Butler were the teachers hired for the 1892-3 term. Mr. Carpenter taught six weeks and resigned and Guy Cleveland was hired to finish the term. Mr. Cleveland was a man of wonderful physical ability, which, in those days, was required in addition to other qualifications attendant upon a successful school teacher, and it is said, with a hickory rod somewhat smaller than the handle of a broom, Mr. Cleveland finished the term in a manner that proved highly satisfactory to the school board, although some of the larger boys whose education needed training from the rod rather than from books, did not admire his method of teaching or his manner of administering corporal punishment.

R. A. Ball was the principal of the school for the 1893-4 term and again Miss Butler was the assistant.

Messrs. Charles O'Neill, N. S. Bristol, and H. A. Lilly were the trustees during the 1894-5 term and at the meeting held June 16, the following-named teachers were hired: M. L. Edwards, principal; Etta Lipson, intermediate department; Franc Butler, primary department.

On December 14, Mr. Edwards tendered his resignation to take effect the first of the year and Joseph A. Williams was secured for the balance of the term. On complaint of Mr. Williams and many of the parents whose children were attending school, on January 17, 1895, the school board asked and demanded the resignation of Miss Etta Lipson, a teacher in the intermediate department of the Casper schools, "because the room in which she was a teacher was not properly conducted." The action of the board did not meet with the approval of a great many of the parents who had children in the school, and a mass meeting was held at the town hall on the evening of January 22, 1895, at which nearly one hundred men and women were present. At this mass meeting the members of the board were asked to be present and give some further and definite reason for Miss Lipson's dismissal, but none of the members of the board were present and they had refused to give any further reason for the dismissal of the teacher. A petition was then circulated and signed by a great



number of the voters in the district requesting the board to rescind its action, because the signers considered it unwise and against the best interest of the school. Still the members of the board did not comply with the request, and then came a set of resolutions asking the board to resign, the whereases and resolves being couched in language as follows:

"WHEREAS, A petition has been circulated among the patrons of the Intermediate department and among the citizens of School district No. 2, and said petition has been signed by at least one half of the electors in School district No. 2, and said petition has been duly presented, asking that Miss Etta Lipson be retained in her position as a teacher in our public school, and said board of trustees refuse to receive and recognize said petition, but have wholly ignored the said petition; and

"WHEREAS, The best interests of the public schools are injured by the removal of a teacher in the middle of the term; and

"WHEREAS, Upon due request from persons having authority to ask said board to file specific charges against said Etta Lipson as a teacher, and they have wholly failed to do so; and

"WHEREAS, Upon due inquiry said board is unable to give any well founded reasons for the removal of said Etta Lipson, the teacher in our public schools, and as it is the belief of those that have gone to the members of the school board and conversed with them about the matter, that the board is acting partial in the matter, and with malicious spite in the matter, and with anything but the best interests of the school at heart;

"THEREFORE, We, the citizens, electors and patrons of the public schools of Casper, in mass meeting assembled, do ask and request that the present trustees of School district No. 2, to-wit: Charles O'Neill, N. S. Bristol and H. A. Lilly, that they resign as trustees in and for said School district, and do hereby prefer charges against them as follows, to-wit: Acting with malicious spite in asking for the resignation of Miss Etta Lipson as a teacher in our public schools at this time.

"Second: Acting partially in the matter, and for the promotion of unknown and divers personal reasons known only to themselves.

"Third: As being enemies to the best interests of our public schools.

"Fourth: As acting unwisely and arbitrarily in ignoring and failing to take into consideration the petition heretofore presented to them protesting against the removal of Miss Lipson as a teacher."

The members of the board were still inclined to the opinion that they were right in the dismissal of the teacher and Miss Lipson was not allowed to finish the term and the members of the board did not resign. Miss Lipson, however, did not send in her resignation as requested by the board and on January 25 she was tendered a check in payment for her services for the full time she had taught and Mrs. L. Brown was secured to finish the term and she was installed as teacher on January 28. Miss Lipson also appeared at the school room on the morning of the 28th and the members of the board requested her to deliver to them the keys to the school building and the register, but she refused and carried them home with her. Then she brought action in the courts against the board for her salary. The board retaliated by bringing action against Miss Lipson for the recovery of the school register and the keys to the school house. The school

board secured the register and the keys, but Miss Lipson did not get the salary she asked for. Mr. Williams, the principal, went to Omaha the latter part of January where he was called on account of sickness in his family, and failing to return, at the meeting of the board held on February 5, five dollars was appropriated to pay for telegrams sent out to secure another principal. Professor S. E. Notson was finally secured, and he finished the term in a manner that was highly satisfactory to all concerned. The enrollment during this school year was 140, the grammar department having 41; intermediate department, 45; primary department, 54.

In 1895, our school had grown to such proportions that four teachers were required. Professor S. E. Notson was in charge and Mary E. Hurlburt, Hattie Bethards and Mrs. Notson were the teachers in the grammar, intermediate and primary departments. The enrollment was 124, with 24 in the high school, 30 in the grammar department, 28 in the intermediate department, and 42 in the primary department. Mrs. Notson resigned during the term and Miss Minnie Burns was hired to finish the term. For the 1896-7 term the same corps of teachers was hired who had finished the 1895-6 term. George James Wilson and Elizabeth Jameson graduated at the end of this term, and these were the first students to graduate from the public schools of Casper.

For the 1897-8 term a kindergarten department was established in the Casper schools and Miss Adah Turner (now Mrs. F. W. Cottman) had charge of this department. The other teachers were the same as those who taught the 1896-7 term.

The second teachers' institute for Natrona county convened in Casper on June 14, 1897, with Miss Wilhelmena Clark as county superintendent. The following-named teachers were present: Alma Morgan of Winthrop; Clyde L. Carpenter, Freeland; Matilda Leeper, Ervay; Mattie Ervay, Ervay; Paulina Smith, Casper; Effie Cummings, Casper; Adah Turner, Casper; Minnie Burns, Casper; Hattie Bethards, Casper; Minnie Hurlburt, Casper; S. E. Notson, Casper.

For the 1898-9 term, S. E. Notson was retained as principal and Miss Adah Turner again had charge of the kindergarten. Mrs. T. A. Dean, Miss Eva Cantlin and Miss May Hamilton were the other teachers. On account of ill health Mr. Notson resigned after teaching about a month and Mrs. E. C. Jameson took his place until Will F. Chase came in January. The second graduation exercises of the Casper public schools were held on April 3, 1900, and Clark Johnson was the only graduate.

Will F. Chase was retained as the principal for the 1899-1900 term, and Mrs. Dean, Miss Hamilton, Miss Cantlin and Miss Turner

were the other teachers. The enrollment was 34 for the high school; grammar department, 15; intermediate department, 30; second primary, 27; first primary, 55; total, 161. Mr. Chase was a failure as a teacher and an executive in a school room, and although he was allowed to finish the term, he came nearly finishing the school at the same time.

The school enrollment on September 6, 1900, was: Kindergarten, first and second grades, 55; Miss Turner and Miss Leeper teachers; third and fourth grades, 38, Miss Edith Evans teacher; fifth and sixth grades, 23, Miss Hamilton, teacher (Miss Hamilton resigned January 1, to take the position of county superintendent of schools and she was succeeded by Miss Effie Cummings, who finished the term); seventh and eighth grades, 23, Miss Cantlin, teacher; high school, 27, F. E. Matheny, principal. Total enrollment, 166.

At the annual school election held on May 6, 1901, an appropriation of \$3,700 was made for school purposes for district No. 2, \$2,500 of which was to be used for the payment of teachers' salaries and the remainder was to be used for incidental expenses. The enrollment for the past year averaged 255, seventy-two more than the previous year.

Teachers retained for the 1901-2 term were F. E. Matheny, J. B. Ruple, Carrie Friend, Effie Cummings, Nora Crow, Edith Evans, Mrs. F. E. Matheny, Mary Craig.

The proposition to issue bonds for the erection of a new school house and to vote a levy of two mills to pay for the same was voted upon at a special election held on Saturday, January 2, 1901. There were sixty votes for the bonds and two votes against. The new building was to be 42x68 feet, containing four rooms, each room to be 28x32 feet. The site for the new building was on Center street, between Park and Milton streets (now Eighth and Ninth streets), where the Park school is now situated. The contract for the construction of this building was let to local contractors and the members of the school board were superintending the work. There was some jealousy among other local builders and considerable feeling was worked up against the members of the board by these builders and their friends, the claim being made that the contractors were not complying with the specifications, and on August 14, 1901, a warrant was issued by County Attorney Alex T. Butler, charging the members of the board, consisting of Frank Wood, S. W. Conwell, and W. E. Tubbs, with the "misappropriation of public funds for the erection of a public building, the said public building not being erected according to the accepted and adopted plans and specifications." When the warrant was served by the sheriff, the members of the board were at the site of the building making an investigation of the work that had thus far been done, and

upon which considerable complaint had been made by some of the taxpayers and competitors of the contractors. After being placed under arrest the members of the board appeared before Justice of the Peace Frank Jameson, and asked that their preliminary trial be extended for ten days. The request was granted and each of the members was placed under a bond of five hundred dollars to appear for trial. The members refused to give the bond and they were placed under charge of the sheriff, who, by order of the county attorney, incarcerated them in the county jail. The members of the board were served with a sumptuous dinner by the sheriff, at the expense of the county, and nearly everyone in the town, except the county attorney and the families of the members of the board, looked upon the matter as a joke. After dinner the sheriff took upon himself the responsibility of releasing the members upon their own recognizances to appear for trial upon the date set by the court.

The information issued by the county attorney contended that "the school building was not being erected according to plans and specifications; that changes had been made in the building which were less costly than the original plans; that work on the building could not be safely proceeded with, and if the building was completed as per the changes that had been made, it would not be a safe and strong building." The members of the board claimed that they were looking after the building in a businesslike manner; that the contractors were proceeding satisfactorily; that no complaint had ever been made to them as to unsatisfactory workmanship on the building or material in the building, and that not as much as one penny had been misappropriated knowingly by them.

Before the day set for trial the county attorney indicated that the case would be dismissed, but a subpoena was served on the officer, requiring that he be brought into court on August 24, 1901, at 10 o'clock a.m. with all the affidavits and other papers relative to the case. On the 24th of August, the case was postponed until September 16, on account of sickness of Justice Jameson. At the trial the case was dismissed, and the board was vindicated.

The enrollment for Casper schools in September, 1901, was: High school, 24; grammar department, 24; intermediate A, 35; intermediate B, 27; primary A, 20; primary B, 29; kindergarten, 34; total 193. The teachers retained for the 1901-2 school year were F. E. Matheny, principal, J. B. Ruple, assistant principal, Carrie Friend, grammar department, Effie Cummings, fifth grade, Nora M. Crow, fourth, Edith Evans, second primary, Mrs. Matheny, first primary, Mary Craig, kindergarten. The three first-named teachers were located in the new building referred to in the preceding paragraph.

The teachers for the 1902-3 term were, F. E. Matheny, E. M. Childs, Mrs. F. E. Matheny, Mary Craig, Edith Evans, Althea Marian Jones, Emma Yard, Minnie B. Whitmore, Bertha B. Goetzman. The enrollment was: High school, 21, seventh and eighth grades, 27; fifth and sixth grades, 34; fourth grade, 25; third grade, 33; second grade, 24; first primary, 29; kindergarten, 23; total, 216.

The schools had made a decided improvement under this corps of teachers and Mr. Matheny was retained as superintendent for the 1903-4 term, with the following teachers: J. J. Jewett, principal, Bertha Goetzman, Effie Cummings, Mrs. Matheny, Sue Merriam, Bertha Imhoff, Mary Holmes, Mary Craig. In the Central school building there were the kindergarten, first, second, third, and fourth grades, and in the Park school building, there were fifth, sixth, grammar, and high school. The enrollment was 253. The school census taken in Casper in June, 1904, showed 312 people in district No. 2 between the ages of six and twenty-one years. At the school election of district No. 2, held in 1905, the secretary's report showed an enrollment of 287 pupils. There were ten teachers. It cost the district \$9,915.54 to conduct the schools of the preceding year. Of this amount \$6,477.93 was paid to the teachers, \$2,802.23 for other expenses in maintaining the schools, \$160.00 library fund, and \$472.38 kindergarten fund.

Mr. Matheny was engaged as superintendent for the 1904-5 term, and Mr. Jewett was the principal. Miss Catherine Gries, Miss Bertha Goetzman, Miss Effie Cummings, Miss Allie West, Miss Sue Merriam, Miss Bertha Imhoff, and Miss Mary Craig were the teachers. For the 1905-6 term the enrollment was slightly increased and one additional teacher was hired. For the maintenance of the schools in district No. 2 there was drawn on the teacher's fund, \$6,930.07, and on the special fund, \$2,200.80; making a sum total of \$9,130.87.

The average monthly salary for male teachers in Wyoming in 1906 was \$74.14, and for female teachers \$49.50. In 1907 the average salary for male teachers was \$85.20, and for female teachers \$53.50.

Thus far we have given somewhat at length the commencement, growth, success and vicissitudes of our schools, the trials of the teachers, the hardships of the pupils, the difficulties of the members of the school board and the interest of the parents, because a full description was necessary in order that the people nowadays might appreciate the cumbersomeness of building up a school in a frontier village to the magnitude of the present school system, but to continue the minor details, giving the names of teachers, the number of pupils, the personnel of the school board, et cetera, for each year from 1906 up to 1922, would make a large volume in itself, on account of



the wonderful improvements, changes and increase in the number of pupils and teachers that have been made, therefore we will have to be content with a brief résumé of the schools up to the present time and a comparison of the same from the first day that Mrs. Adah E. Allen called her little flock of nineteen pupils to order until the end of the year 1922, when there were nearly 4,400 pupils and about 170 teachers in the city of Casper, which is considered the biggest and most up-to-date school town in the state. The census of school district No. 2, taken in May, 1910, showed 529 persons of school age, against 465 the previous year. Three colored children were included in the 1910 census.

The contract was let for the building of the Natrona County High school on May 21, 1913, for \$35,550, and \$6,000 for the plumbing and heating. C. R. Inman was the building contractor and W. W. Keefe did the plumbing. This was one of Casper's public buildings that was erected without dissension from "Casper's Trouble Makers Club," most of the members of which had been called hence or moved to other climes where progress and push were not so much in evidence as at Casper.

There were enrolled in the Casper schools on November 1, 1919, 2,080 pupils. Of this number 226 were students in the High school. Eighty-three teachers were employed in the city. On account of the congested condition of the school buildings a room in the public library and one in the Episcopal gymnasium were used for classes, and later it was found necessary to use two additional rooms in the basement of the library. During the 1919-20 school year \$80,285.27 was expended for teachers' salaries, and \$89,929.82 was expended for school house expenses and supplies. The school census showed an increase from 958 in 1915 to 2,797, in 1920. At the end of the term in 1921 the enrollment was 3,046.

In 1921, a material increase was made in the salaries of the teachers in the grade schools of district No. 2 as well as for the instructors in the Natrona County High school, and sex discrimination was entirely eliminated. A minimum of \$1,600 a year for all grade teachers, with an increase of \$100 a year as long as they remained in the Casper schools, and a minimum of \$2,000 for High school instructors. Formerly an instructor in the Casper schools, teaching grades below the sixth, was started at \$1,560, with an increase of \$60 a year. In the sixth, seventh and eighth grades the minimum was \$1,620 a year, with a \$60 increase. By placing all grade teachers on the same plane, teachers below the sixth grade were to receive an increase in salary, as well as women members of the High school faculty. In the high school a woman instructor was started at \$1,956, while a



man received \$2,076, but it was decided that both men and women instructors should receive \$2,000 for the first year of their service, with the yearly increase as above stated.

At the beginning of the term in 1921 there was an enrollment of 3,338 pupils in school district No. 2 which includes the city of Casper, Mills and Salt Creek. A comparison of the enrollment in 1920 and 1921 is herewith shown:

School	1920	1921	Increase
West Casper.....	200	422	222
Central.....	561	564	3
Park.....	473	500	27
East Casper.....	482	608	126
Elk Street.....	...	200	200
North Casper.....	218	399	181
High school.....	220	375	155
Mills.....	35	120	85
Salt Creek.....	58	153	95

The rooms in all the school buildings of Casper, as well as those at Mills and Salt Creek were overcrowded, and it was at once decided to erect a new ten-room building in North Casper and a six-room building in South Casper. New buildings were in course of construction at Mills and Salt Creek. At the beginning of this term there were 120 teachers, but fifteen more teachers were added to the force at once.

At the beginning of the year 1922, there was an enrollment of 3,950 pupils in the district, against 472 in 1911, and there were 150 grade teachers and twenty-five High school teachers, against fifteen in 1911. A summary of the Natrona County High school on December 31, 1921, showed an enrollment of 436 students, 185 boys and 251 girls; there were twenty full-time instructors and five were employed part of the time. The equipment and property of the High school district was listed as follows: Books in library, 1,121 volumes; 26 magazines; special librarian in charge throughout the day. Cost of apparatus: Science, \$2,175; domestic science, \$2,450; music, \$720; maps, \$175; gymnasium, \$2,000; manual training, \$5,000; commercial, \$1,880. Two large and up-to-date buildings. Area of eight acres of land, with grandstand and well-fenced field of such unusual quality as is rarely found in connection with high schools. Two well equipped gymnasiums.

At the end of 1922 there were thirty High school instructors, with three supervisors in the Natrona County High school, located in Casper; there were 136 grade teachers, with five supervisors and six special teachers for subnormal and abnormal children. There were about 4,400 pupils in the district with 535 in the High school, and the

balance in the grade schools of Casper, Mills and Salt Creek, with all the school buildings crowded and overflowing.

Bonds were voted in the summer of 1922 for a \$500,000 building for the Natrona County High school district, to be located in Casper. A list of the buildings constructed in 1920-21, the number of rooms, and the cost of each building is given below:

School	No. Rooms	Cost
Vocational High.....	..	\$250,000
West Casper.....	15	100,000
Elk Street.....	7	35,000
North Casper.....	14	125,000
Mills.....	6	35,000
South Casper.....	7	35,000
Salt Creek.....	4	20,000
Mud Springs.....	1	1,500
Horse Camp.....	1	800
Country Club.....	1	800
Total.....		\$608,100

In 1922 a new fifteen-room building was constructed in North Casper and six rooms were added to the East Casper school building. There were six teachers in Salt Creek and 180 pupils, and five teachers in Mills and 160 pupils. Of the other rural schools in the county, in 1922, district No. 3 comprised the Freeland school, with 7 pupils; Dickinson, 4 pupils; Laney's, 4 pupils. No. 4, Bessemer, 10 pupils, with 25 more pupils in this district, near Emigrant Gap and on the Yellowstone Highway, not attending school. No. 5, Split Rock, or Dumb Bell, 3 pupils; Sanford, 1 pupil. No. 6, Clarkson, or Childers, 2 pupils; Jourgensen, 1 pupil. No. 7, Alcova, 7 pupils. No. 9, Bucknum, 8 pupils; Wilson Creek, 10 pupils. No. 10, Winthrop, or Clark's, 13 pupils. No. 11, Muddy, or Brooks, 14 pupils. No. 12, Greenlaw, 2 pupils. No. 13, Oil City, 6 pupils; Waltman, 10 pupils; Brotherson, 5 pupils. No. 15, Deer Creek Park, 3 pupils. No. 16, Natrona, 19 pupils; Powder River, 11 pupils. No. 17, Pathfinder, 2 pupils. No. 18, Arminto, 16 pupils; Wolton, 11 pupils; Badwater, 3 pupils; Keiver, 2 pupils. In addition to the above the schools at Wilson, or the Poor Farm, the Country Club, Horse Ranch, Ohio Oil company's South Camp, Kasoming, Mud Springs, Glenrock-Carter Camp, all of which are in district No. 2, should be termed as rural schools.

Thus it may be seen that the schools of Natrona county have kept pace with the growth and improvement in the business and professional lines and it may be truly said that the spirit of the school is high, the moral standards strong, the attitude of pupils favorable, the educational aims and achievements promising, and the support of the public liberal and loyal.

## Natrona County's Towns

### BESSEMER TOWN

THE town of Bessemer was established in the summer of 1888, at about the same time people commenced to locate in Casper, and it was called by its enthusiastic citizens the "Queen City of the West."

The Wyoming Improvement company surveyed the site and platted the town lots which consisted of forty-nine blocks, in addition to which grounds were reserved "upon which to erect the future capitol building of Wyoming." A bridge was built across the river and advertising folders were issued in February, 1889, setting forth the resources and advantages of the place. A great many town lots were sold, and the citizens had been given assurance that the railroad would be built into the town not later than 1890.

Miss Clementine Evans (now Mrs. P. C. Nicolaysen), was Bessemer's first school teacher. There were in the town a drug store, two general merchandise stores, a saloon, a newspaper, blacksmith shop, hotel, restaurant and the other establishments that went to make up a typical frontier village.

In the spring of 1890 the newspaper, the *Bessemer Journal*, stated that Max A. Jaensch was in the town making arrangements for the construction of a brewery, and a wholesale and retail liquor house was to be established there as soon as the buildings could be completed.

A stage line was operated between Casper and Bessemer, round trips being made twice each day, leaving each point at 7 o'clock in the morning and arriving at 2:30 in the afternoon. Among the well-known men who were engaged in business there and who are yet residents of the county are W. A. Blackmore, who was proprietor of the drug store, and G. W. Johnson, who was postmaster and also conducted a general store. Others who were engaged in business there, but who long ago left the county or have been called hence, were G. C. Riggles, harness and saddlery; Frank J. Posvar, dry goods and groceries; Conrad Houk, saloon; J. Enos Waite, publisher *Bessemer Journal*; C. W. Eads, livery; Mrs. C. M. Doss, hotel; Charles Peterson, real estate; Charles Ford, brick plant; J. W. Van Gordon, boarding house. Wm. Clark was proprietor of the "Searight House,"

which he advertised as being "the best hotel in Central Wyoming, with accommodations unsurpassed." He also "supplied parties with good rigs and saddle horses at reasonable rates who wished to go over the oil regions." John Clark was proprietor of the Bessemer-Casper stage line. Chris Baysel was the architect and builder of Bessemer. Mr. Baysel's energy and enthusiasm was probably more commendable than his ability as a builder, for the houses he constructed were quite susceptible to the high winds that prevailed on the open prairies and although none of them were ever blown down, they failed to keep out the dust in the summer or the snows of winter. He was given the contract to draw the plans and specifications for the bridge crossing the Platte river at Bessemer, and during its construction, in addition to being the architect, he voluntarily assumed the responsibility as foreman of the construction gang, which caused dissension among the workmen. One evening after work a meeting was held by the workmen and Frank Verden was chosen as their boss, and the next morning when Baysel appeared on the bridge and commenced to direct the men, Mr. Verden, who was a tall and very strong man, lifted him in the air and pitched him into the river, about fifteen feet below. Baysel, after emerging from the stream, went home, changed clothing, and in a short time moved to Casper, where his services were somewhat in demand.

Bessemer was a candidate on April 8, 1890, against Casper for the county seat of Natrona county, and the people of that precinct cast 667 votes, while in Casper precinct 304 votes were cast. It was estimated that there were at least three times as many votes cast in Bessemer as there were men, women, and children; and it was likewise said that the people of Casper did not overlook casting her full quota, and a few votes possibly might have been cast in Casper that were a shade off color. It is not improbable that some Casper electors exercised their franchise more than once that day. The Bessemer vote was thrown out, however, and the town lost not only the county seat, but the railroad did not come through as was promised and expected; the oil well, which was being drilled close to the town turned out to be a duster; the residents commenced to pack up and leave; and the business houses commenced to close up. Everything went from bad to worse and in a very few years there was not a house or building of any kind left in the town. They had all been torn down and moved away. Today there is nothing left of Bessemer but a few holes in the ground, and thus died the town that "hit the ball" and was up and doing from the date of its birth until she lost the railroad, the county seat, her oil well, and her life all at about the same time. During the middle of the summer of 1891 the first house built in Bes-



TOWN OF BESSEMER, 1890



BESSEMER POSTOFFICE, 1892 —GEORGE W. JOHNSON, WIFE AND SON





semer was torn down and moved to Casper. The people had already given up hope of the railroad coming that way, and quite a number of people who went there with great expectations had moved away, selling their property and their goods at the best price they could.

The *Bessemer Journal* suspended publication in December, 1890. J. Enos Waite, who published the paper under contract with the Wyoming Improvement company, being unwilling to continue the struggle, and the Improvement company, being reluctant to put any more money in the proposition, came to the mutual understanding that the publication should cease. The newspaper plant was attached by an Omaha paper jobbing house to satisfy a claim for paper furnished the company, and the sheriff had the types and presses and other material moved from Bessemer to Casper on February 24, and sold at auction on the 28th. Waite then went to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he published the *Real Estate News* for a couple of months, and then returned to Casper and commenced the publication of the *Natrona Tribune* on June 1, 1891, the plant used for this paper being the old *Bessemer Journal* plant. It had been purchased by about a dozen Casper men who had incorporated the Republican Publishing company.

The records at the court house show that on August 4, 1892, "The Wyoming Improvement company being indebted to the county in the amount of \$265.78 for taxes, and as the said company is the owner of a bridge across the Platte river at Bessemer, it is ordered that the county treasurer be instructed to accept a conveyance of the bridge to the county, and the county cancel any and all taxes that may stand on the books for the years 1890 and 1891 against the company." This was the last chapter of the town of Bessemer and the Wyoming Improvement company, so far as their importance in Natrona county was concerned. Bessemer Bend, however, is today one of the prettiest spots in Natrona county. Located at the west end of the foothills of Casper mountain, along the eastern bank of the Platte river about fifteen miles west from Casper, are a dozen beautiful and prosperous ranches. These ranches are in a valley which is protected from the winds that usually sweep down over the country. A large spring on the west side of the river furnishes an abundance of water for irrigating purposes and bountiful crops of small grains are raised and in the valley there are several orchards where luscious apples are grown in great quantities.

A company was organized in 1920-21 which drilled several thousand feet for oil in the Bessemer valley, but the result was a disappointment to the stockholders. But their disappointment was of small moment compared to the mortification of the sturdy men and

women who did their bit toward building a town on the bleak prairie where there was no water to supply the needs of even the household, where there was no shelter from the scorching suns of the summer or the howling storms of winter and where nothing would grow but cactus and sage brush.

The "Searight House," previously mentioned as being operated by Wm. Clark, was not within the corporate limits of the town of Bessemer, but was located about a quarter of a mile east of the town proper. This house was built in the late '70's or early '80's, by the Searight Cattle company of Texas, and it is still standing. The lumber, hardware and other material used in the building of this house was hauled from Cheyenne by freight teams, a distance of more than 225 miles. Joe Black was foreman for the Searight outfit for a number of years and made his headquarters at this house, which was then, and is yet, known as the Goose Egg ranch house. Martin Gothberg was one of the cowboys for the Searight company. The place was sometimes called the Stone ranch, because the house is built of stone, but the original and proper name is the Goose Egg. J. M. Carey bought the Goose Egg property in 1886 and is yet the owner. In the early days this ranch house was the scene of many sociable events among the cattlemen and cowboys, and there is a great deal of interesting history in connection with it.

Owen Wister selected the Goose Egg ranch as the location for one of the most interesting and exciting episodes of his "Virginian." Although Wister, in his "Virginian," says that the Goose Egg is located on Bear creek, it must be remembered that writers of fiction are always careless as to names, dates and locations. The Goose Egg is located near the mouth of Poison Spider creek, where it empties into the Platte river, while Bear creek is in Converse county, about seventy-five miles east of the Goose Egg ranch. But Wister does not claim that his description of the country is correct or all the events mentioned in his book are true, and he purposely changed the names of people, ranches, creeks, and mountains that went to make up his most interesting story, therefore it must be borne in mind that the "Virginian" is a novel, and not a history, and Wister is a writer of fiction and not of facts, and he says in the beginning that the characters in his book, the events and many of the places are not real, therefore it is not the purpose of the author of this book to discredit Wister's "Virginian" but is rather our aim to caution the reader of the novel not to place too much reliance upon it, and more especially upon a joke perpetrated upon some eastern newspaper writers who passed through Casper in 1911, when it was represented to them that a well known CY cowboy, who afterwards made his home in Casper, was



GOOSE EGG RANCH HOUSE

Selected by Owen Wister as the place for many interesting episodes in his "Virginian."



selected as the hero of the "Virginian." It should be remembered that the hero was supposed to have come to Wyoming from Virginia. The joke has been carried so far that many of the recent arrivals in Natrona county actually believe that the Virginian was this former CY cowboy.

But let us get back to the Goose Egg ranch house, near where the town of Bessemer was located. It was here according to Wister, that the Virginian came more than one hundred miles on horse back to be present at the Swinton barbecue, to see Molly Wood, the school teacher, and to attend the dance; it was here that the Virginian again met Trampas and made him "stand on his laigs" and admit that he was a liar when he made some derogatory remarks about the school teacher; it was in this house that the school teacher snubbed the hero because he asked her to dance with him before he had been introduced to her, and he felt so badly over it that he and Lin McLean, another cowboy, who came from Massachusetts, got gloriously drunk, and, while in their cups and while the dancers were enjoying themselves in another room, changed the clothing on a dozen babies and then changed the babies from the positions their mothers had left them, and the change was not noticed until the mothers and fathers reached home at an early hour in the morning, and then found that they had brought home with them their own baby's clothing but not their own baby; it was here that a dozen mothers and fathers returned with all possible haste and after all had assembled it took the mothers about two hours to straighten out the mix-up and for each of them to get back her own baby with its proper wearing apparel, all of which makes interesting reading and was a good joke on the mothers, if such a thing had ever occurred, but, according to many old-timers who would have known of it, such a thing never happened at the Goose Egg ranch house or any other ranch house in this part of Wyoming, and while there were dances at the Goose Egg ranch house occasionally, the barbecue as described by Wister and the baby mix-up was wholly and entirely imaginary, and those who have been led to believe that certain of Casper's citizens were the instigators of the baby episode and that some of Casper's matrons were some of the babies connected with the story, it may be depended upon that they have been imposed upon, as were the newspaper writers from the east who visited Casper in 1911, and as a joke were given this interesting data upon which they could write an entertaining article for their newspapers.

#### ALCOVA'S BRIGHT PROSPECTS

The prospects for Alcova, about thirty-five miles southwest from Casper to become one of the greatest summer and health resorts in

the west thirty years ago were very encouraging, but, like some men, it was ambitious beyond its station, and thus far has been doomed to disappointment. In the early spring of 1891 an eastern syndicate, headed by Isaac Van Horn, purchased the hot springs and the town-site from G. C. Riggles. It was then announced that \$250,000 would be expended to make the improvements that the company contemplated, and that \$75,000 would be expended that year. A steam engine was to be purchased and used to pump water from the river for the purpose of irrigating lands adjacent to the springs and making fine lawns and beautifying the town lots. Two streets were laid out, one of them, on the south side of the river, was to be one and one-half miles in length, and town lots were platted on either side of this street. A similar street was laid out on the opposite side of the river. Four or five seven-room cottages were to be erected at once by the members of the company, who were to move their families there and reside. A suspension foot bridge was to be built from wall to wall in the center of the canyon, about 250 feet above the water and the president of the company said he was negotiating for cable with which to build this bridge. Walks were to be constructed in the canyon on both sides, connecting with the foot bridge, and this was to be grand beyond comparison. A first-class stage road was to be built from Casper to the springs by this company. Hotels and bathing accommodations were to be prepared, and as soon as everything was in readiness a daily stage line would be established from Casper to the new health resort, and a stage line was also to be put on from Alcova to the Yellowstone National park. This was the announcement made in April.

In October of the same year the company sent a representative to Casper to contract for lumber for the first buildings, bridges, etc., which was to be hauled to the grounds at once and it was said that work upon the buildings would continue during the entire winter, and in June, 1892, they expected to have everything in readiness to throw open to the thousands of visitors, who would surely come to avail themselves of the healing, health-giving waters, but in the meantime the water from the springs was free to all who desired to go there and "camp" and bathe.

"Until the railroad is built in," the syndicate announced, "we will run a daily stage line of six-horse stage coaches from Casper over the romantic and scenic road. We will build a bridge across the river about twenty miles from Casper, and this structure will be built entirely of native lumber, with piers of different colored stone. We may also put in a line of small steamers and sail boats between Casper and the springs for those who would prefer the water route.



"All the buildings and improvements at the springs will be modern and of the latest and most improved designs. There will be pavilions, driveways, walks and cozy nooks and dark caverns, glass bath tubs, plunge and swimming baths, boats and steam yachts and every convenience for the accommodation of our guests, and in a few years the Alcovia Hot springs will be the Arkansas of the West."

Then money matters tightened up in the fall and all work was suspended until the following spring, when T. C. VanHorn and E. P. Weatherly, secretary and treasurer of the Alcovia Hot Springs company, arrived from the east and went out to the property. They claimed that they had succeeded in putting the company on a sound financial basis and would now complete the improvements contemplated. And upon the strength of these promises, some more Alcovia town lots were sold, but, like the promises heretofore made, they were not kept, and the "resort" failed to materialize. Hope, however, was not entirely lost, for again in the fall of 1898 an effort was made to revive interest, raise capital and put new life in the little village. A pamphlet was issued called the "Problem of Life," the title of which, it must be admitted, was not inappropriately applied. In this pamphlet the leading article stated that "Mother Nature has endowed Alcovia with a beautiful and ideal valley to rest in, encircling it with rock-ribbed hills that were upheaved by some volcanic action ages ago. Fremont canyon is an example; it must have been level with the valley but now it stands 1,000 feet high, cleft in twain, and through its solid rock walls the river Platte, 300 feet wide, passes and from its perpendicular side a score or more of springs of hot water flow, ranging from 132 to 139 degrees Fahrenheit. The analysis of these waters shows them to be of wonderful medical qualities, and miraculous cures have been experienced through them.

"The chemists say the water will be very beneficial as a bath. Taken internally it will prove a mild laxative, and taken in connection with the bath would be beneficial in chronic diseases, such as rheumatism, gout, stiff joints, etc.

"The hot springs have intrinsic value alone, justifying the sick in making a journey of thousands of miles to bathe and drink the healing draught. These, coupled with the many attractive features of the surroundings, will aid nature's cures, and while the fountain of youth may not be found here, yet it will instill and renew the feelings of youth.

"The city has an altitude of 6,000 feet. It is hemmed in on the south and west by Fremont canyon, on the east by the Red cliff and on the north by the conglomerate reef facing La Bonte canyon that contains the most stupendous works of the elements. On the face of

this reef is exposed the greatest variety of stone ever known to exist in one quarry. There is granite, marble, limestone, red and white sandstone in layers that breaks into squares ready for the builder's use. This quarry won the premium at the World's Fair at Chicago. The pen may describe, the camera may portray but the artist must plant his easel in this canyon at the setting of the sun on some clear June day to gather the varied hues and catch the colorings in the landscape of nature's wonderland; nothing grander will ever be spread on canvas.

"These canyons, cliffs and reefs are 800 to 1,200 feet high, protecting Alcova from storms and making a cozy retreat in the winter, which insures to the sick the finest and healthiest climate all the year of any springs resort on earth.

"To the southwest is a canyon six miles long, with rock walls often 1,500 feet high. The Platte river flows through it; the scenery is grand, but no boat can pass through it on account of cataracts. Fremont lost his boats and some of his men there in 1842 making the attempt.

"To the west are saponite beds, a beautiful white substance like sapolio, but much finer grain. Place it powdered upon a burn, it will relieve the pain and heal the burn in a few hours, leaving no scar. Powdered and snuffed up the nostrils it makes nature's own cure for catarrh. Rub the tooth brush across the cake and it makes the finest of tooth powders, cleansing, purifying and whitening even old tobacco-stained teeth.

"The weather is always superb, making boating most enjoyable. Fishing is a splendid treat, as one can catch perch, cat and pike as long as your arm. These pleasures are at your hand and it is no trouble to reach them, as the river flows through Alcova.

"Nature, with generous care, having provided hot springs, climate, scenery and raw materials sufficient to build a city that will be an honor to her majesty, awaits the magic touch and charm that will improve with modern facilities her wondrous work for the healing of mankind."

More than thirty years have passed since the bright future was thus promised for the little town at the foothills of the mountains. Today there is a small general store there, a school house, several comfortable residences and about a dozen log cabins, most of them unoccupied. The great hopes of the promoters and bright prospects for the town are blasted, for the time being, at least, but the wonderful hot springs, whose waters contain marvelous mineral properties, are yet flowing and gushing from the rocks alongside the river, and some day capital may be invested there, and the

brightest dreams and greatest hopes of the people of the little town may be realized. Who knows?

### TOWN OF BOTHWELL

There was a movement on foot early in the year of 1889 to establish the town of "Bothwell" in the Sweetwater country, situated about two and a half miles north from the banks of Sweetwater river and nearly opposite Horse creek, where the Bothwell ranch houses were originally located. The Sweetwater Land and Improvement company was incorporated with a capital of \$300,000, with J. R. Bothwell and A. J. Bothwell at the head. Circulars were issued in January, 1889, setting forth the advantages of the new town, and town plats were executed. The lots were offered at from \$150 to \$400 each.

"Fertile valleys and large stock interests, close connection to the oil fields and mining interests and soda beds, and at no distant date the removal of the state capital, the Wyoming Central extension of the Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley railway will move west from Casper through the Sweetwater valley before the close of the year," were some of the advantages set forth in the circular booming the new town. There was a store, a blacksmith shop, a newspaper called the *Sweetwater Chief*, a postoffice, a saloon, owned by James Averell, and a "hog ranch" owned by Ella Watson, spread over the flat during the summer of '89, but for the reason that the townsite was forty-five miles from the railroad, that the "fertile valleys" were producing nothing more than wild grass, grease wood, sage brush and cactus, and that up to date no precious minerals or oil had been found in the vicinity, and because of the fact that the price of the town lots was above and beyond all reason, very few, if any, Bothwell town lots were ever sold.

In the middle of the summer when the boom was on, Averell and the Watson woman were hanged by some cattlemen to the limb of a tree, and their dead bodies were buried in the door yard of Averell's saloon; the newspaper suspended publication for the lack of news and the want of support; the storekeeper moved away; the blacksmith closed up his shop, and thus the town of Bothwell winked out and died.

There is now nothing on the proposed Bothwell townsite but the graves of Jim Averell and Ella Watson. The Bothwell ranch house and other buildings were moved about a mile to the north a number of years ago. Thus Bothwell townsite is left with nothing but a memory of the little settlement where there were many interesting and

exciting escapades in which the cowboys, the cattle owners, the cattle rustlers, and the all 'round bad man played their parts.

### RISE AND FALL OF EADSVILLE

Twenty acres of land on top of Casper mountain, ten miles due south from Casper, was filed upon in 1890 by Charles W. Eads, and it was surveyed and platted for a site for a stamp mill. It attained the name of a "town" early in the year 1891, and its name was Eads-ville, but the "town" consisted of only three log cabins at that time. Lots were sold during the years of 1891-2 and ten or twelve more cabins were put up during those years. In the center of the town was a large spring of pure, ice-cold water, of sufficient flow to supply several thousand people.

Gold, silver, galena, copper, lead, and asbestos mines were opened up on the mountains in all directions from the town, and for several years, in the early 90's, there were forty to fifty people who made their home at this point.

The first real mining excitement in this camp occurred in January, 1891, when S. A. (Jack) Currier received a certificate of an assay from Omaha upon some ore he had sent in, the returns from which showed 33 ounces in silver and 82 per cent lead. In February of the same year, upon the strength of this assay, a telegram was received from Deadwood requesting that six carloads of ore per day be shipped to the mills there, but owing to the fact that the snow in the canyons was from six to ten feet deep, and that the mines had not yet been properly opened up, the shipments could not be made. Many letters were received in Casper every day from mining men inquiring about the camp and the grade of ore that was being taken out, which, it was said, was growing richer with each day's work, and many men were put to work to open up the prospects and have them in shape to be properly shown when an expert from a Denver mining syndicate came up in the early spring to make an examination.

The copper "lead" on the west end of the mountains was found by Bailey and Johnson in February, 1891, with a hanging wall and a ledge more than six feet wide without the foot wall yet being found, the hole being but eight feet deep, but ore was plentiful, even at this shallow depth, being of a rich green oxide of copper, which assays showed 33 per cent in white metal and 42 per cent in copper. This mining camp was called Copperopolis. About this time it was announced that J. E. Daine, who had been a prospector and miner all his life, had prospected and mined all over Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico for thirty-three years, and whose knowledge of rocks and

formations was gained by intimate association with them, now appeared on the scene, and after a visit to the camps, he gave it out that he was "very much surprised at the richness of Casper mountain." He had examined the ore very closely, and it was his belief that Casper mountain was a wonderful camp, with copper ore enough there to supply a smelter now, and he had no doubt but one would be built before fall.

The excitement grew more intense with each day, and the samples of ore, running rich with copper and silver, caused great interest among all classes. The railroad company put on an extra coach and arranged to keep up with the rush and furnish accommodations for the multitudes that would flock here during the spring, the advance guard of which was already arriving.

A petition was circulated and signed by nearly all the business men of Casper asking that a postoffice be established at Eadsville and the maintaining of a daily mail route between Casper and that place. "The miners at the several camps," said the newspapers, "are put to much trouble, expense and delay in communicating with the business men of Casper as well as the financial centers of the east concerning the wonderful strikes that are being made there daily, which is of the utmost importance that they should be known at the earliest possible moment."

Reports were brought down from the mountain on February 22 that there was so much excitement over the finds that were made on the Bailey and Johnson claims on the west end of the mountain that prospectors were camped all over the mountain, and that hundreds of claims were being located. This report caused a movement to immediately start to organize a company among the business men of the town to handle and ship the ore, and to advertise the camp in the east. Both the hotels in Casper—the Graham and the Wentworth—were being enlarged to take care of the great rush that would come in the spring, stores were also being enlarged, and mining supplies added, and every arrangement was being made to take care of the people who were sure to come when the great rush was on, which would be when the snow melted and the ore could be brought down from the mountain in wagons.

Another report the latter part of March said: "All the miners are elated and the camp is booming. Cowboys have quit the range and gone to prospecting, and everybody in and around Casper is putting money in the companies that are being organized. H. E. Sherman, a practical miner and assayer, arrived on March 2 from the Black Hills to make an examination of the properties. He had made assays of some of the ore sent from here which run 78 per cent copper,



and he says that if the lead is an assured fact this will be a greater mining camp than the Anaconda in Montana. Mr. Sherman spent two weeks on the mountains and when he came down he had no hesitancy in declaring that the ore was all that could be desired and that he had no doubt that there was an immense body of it. He offered to sink a shaft one hundred feet deep on one claim in the vicinity of Copperopolis for a half interest in it, and he returned to the mountain hoping to be able to make a deal with some of the locaters."

Gold was discovered near the west end of the mountain on March 6, 1891, by J. E. Daine and G. E. Butler. Although the snow was very deep, Mr. Daine, "the experienced and practical miner," discovered a quartz vein, which upon being tested showed it to be rich in gold. "There is no mistaking the fact," said the *Wyoming Derrick*, "as all the town witnessed the test which was made on Sunday, and the richness of the vein is very extensive."

The excitement continued during the early spring and summer months. New mines were found and new leads were discovered every day; many deals were made and some of the miners became millionaires over night; they did not get the cash, however, but they had the property, which they claimed was just the same. In the meantime Eadsville continued to grow in population and wealth.

On October 28, 1891, a car load of copper ore, consisting of seventeen tons, which was brought down from the mountains, was shipped to a smelter in Chicago, and tacked on the side of the car was a streamer in large letters which read:

COPPER ORE FROM THE GREAT CASPER, WYOMING, CAMP
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Before the returns were received on the first car load of ore, several more car loads were shipped to the same smelter in Chicago. More claims changed hands, and options were sold on six claims for ten thousand dollars for each claim, the money to be paid when the lead was found.

In due time, when the excitement was at its highest point, a report was received from the smelter and it was not difficult to figure out that the returns were not sufficient to justify the work and cash outlay in the production and transportation of the ore.

Like the rush of an avalanche from the mountainside fell the news that their dreams were only dreams and the crushing consciousness that the ore on Casper mountain contained neither copper,



silver nor gold in sufficient quantity to warrant working the claims that only a short time before were considered worth millions.

For many days gloom reigned unbroken in the little town of Casper as well as at the many mining camps on Casper mountain because of the hard truth that the test ore of the first shipment was a disappointment and failure.

But after the first shock, some of the miners hung on and continued to look for new and better locations, and during the summer of 1892 there seemed to be as much excitement and more hope for the camp than there was before the unfavorable returns were received from the smelter at Chicago. For five years some of the men remained, but they gradually dropped out one at a time, until Eadsville became a deserted camp.

No one is living there now, but a number of the log cabins are still standing. The spring, with its pure, ice-cold water flows as full as ever, and during the summertime campers occasionally go there to avoid the heat and hide away from business cares. It is a beautiful place to camp during the summer months, but its attraction as a mining center is gone forever.

Should you go to Eadsville alone and remain over night it will not be difficult to appreciate the change that has been wrought, where during the day there was the sound of men's voices in boisterous laughter, the loud-resounding stroke of the axe which felled the trees to timber the mines and the sharp report of the blast of powder in the shaft and tunnel and in the night, around the shining fires groups of men in fantastic costumes told tales of marvelous adventures, or sung some old-remembered song, or were absorbed in a game of chance, but now there is but superb silence and majestic loneliness, and even the atmosphere itself seems changed to its original purity, and solitude reigns supreme.

### HOGADONE'S TRAIL

The Hogadone trail, on Casper mountain, a short cut from Casper to the once lively camp of Eadsville, is named after John C. Hogadone, one of the first men to take up a mining claim on the mountain. In 1888-89, the nearest road to the top of the mountain was through the CY canyon, but in the summer of '89 Hogadone blazed this trail, coming down and returning on horseback, but all the miners on the mountain put in as much time as they could spare working on this during the summer and they succeeded in getting it in such a condition that a mountain buggy with a team could make the trip to and from the mountain over this route. It was then named the Hogadone trail

and that is the name that will stay with it as long as there is even as much as a bridle path there.

### THE TOWN OF WOLTON

The first settlement where the old town of Wolton was located was made in the early nineties by Jack Clark, now of Powder River, who established a stage station for his father who was operating a mail line from Casper to Lost Cabin over the old Bridger trail. This was known as Poison Creek station. In 1896 the Northwestern Railway company built a reservoir on section 8, township 36, range 87, on Poison creek, about sixty miles northwest of Casper, which was one of a string of reservoirs built for the accommodation of stock trailing from the Lander valley and the Big Horn basin to Casper for shipment to market. In the winter of 1896 and spring of 1897 a store was built at this place and a postoffice established by the Wolton Commercial company, which was organized by C. H. King, one of the pioneers of Casper. The new postoffice was called Wolton and the first postmaster was R. L. Carpenter, now of Casper, who was also manager of the store. Mr. Carpenter remained in charge of the store and postoffice until the fall of 1898, when he was succeeded by W. H. Dickinson of Lander. In January, 1899, the stock of the Wolton Commercial company was purchased by A. J. Cunningham and associates of Casper, who afterward operated the Wolton store as a branch of the Casper store. At the time of the transfer to the new owners O. G. Johnson, now of Casper, was appointed manager and remained in charge a number of years, being succeeded in 1905 by J. A. Warlaumont. At the time of the establishment of the store and postoffice at Wolton one of the largest machine sheep-shearing plants in the west was built at that place and was operated for a number of years under the management of J. D. Holliday. Many thousands of sheep were shorn here every spring, the wool being shipped by wagon freight to Casper. A good water supply for the town was obtained from a spring about a quarter of a mile away. A tank was built on the high ground, a windmill put up, a pipe line laid to the tank and to all buildings in the place, so that, so far as water was concerned, the place had the conveniences of a city. In the early days of Wolton the range was all open and free; there were no homesteaders and the sheep owners and their flocks moved at will from one locality to another. Among those making Wolton a supply place and shearing point in the early days might be mentioned J. D. Woodruff, Wm. Madden, Ed. Merriam, Andrew Cazanave, D. H. Ralston, T. B. Hood, Colin Campbell, J. A. Delfelder, C. D. Hemry, Joe Jay,

E. B. Conkling, Orchard Brothers and a great number of others of the old-timers of western Natrona and eastern Fremont counties. With the establishment of other business a road ranch, or hotel, became necessary, and the Wolton road ranch was opened. The buildings were constructed of logs, which were hauled from the Big Horn mountains, a distance of forty miles. The first eating house was operated by Billy Day, in a shack afterwards used as a warehouse by the Wolton Commercial company. This was soon replaced by the log buildings built and operated by Harry Brower. In connection with the road ranch was the (at that time) inevitable saloon, and Wolton was the scene of many wild times which resulted in a few fatalities, mention of which is made elsewhere in this volume. The road ranch passed into the hands of T. B. Hood, one of the oldest residents of the county, who operated it for a number of years, selling out to E. O. Orchard. Early in 1904 the road ranch and saloon business passed into the hands of J. D. Holliday and J. L. Marquis, under the management of Mr. Marquis, who conducted the business until the fall of 1905, when it passed again into the hands of Mr. Orchard. He conducted the business at the old place until the summer of 1906, when he moved the buildings and business to the new town of Makoma, afterward called Waltman, about eight miles east. Early in the spring of 1906 the Northwestern railroad was extended from Casper to Lander, and a station was established about three miles west of Wolton. The new place was called Wolton and the post-office and store of the Wolton Commercial company were moved to the new location. A nice hotel was also built in the new town by J. L. Marquis and associates. A few stockmen established residences at the new place and a school was established in 1907, with George A. Davis, F. V. Marsh, and C. D. Hemry as the first school board and Miss Mae Wetzel as the first teacher. In 1914, with the completion of the Burlington railroad from Thermopolis to Casper, the hotel and store were moved about seven miles northeast to the new town of Arminto on that road. Wolton then became a very quiet place and at present (1923) is the railroad point for a colony of homesteaders, the stock business of the surrounding country having been practically crowded out by the settlers. The new Yellowstone highway passes through Wolton, but like many of the other towns which sprang up in the county and flourished, it no doubt has seen its best days.

#### ARMINTO INCORPORATED

Arminto was the second town in Natrona county to be incorporated. This town was named after Manuel Armenta, who owned

the "Jack Pot" ranch which was near that station. The Burlington Railroad company changed the "e" to an "i" and the "a" to an "o" in the spelling, as the railroad company changed the "a" to an "e" in the spelling of Casper, which was named after Caspar W. Collins. Arminto is on the C., B. & Q. railroad, fifty-eight miles west from Casper, and like some of the other small towns in Natrona county, its people at one time had great expectations of it becoming a thriving business center, but those expectations have gone a-glimmering and it has now settled down to a substantial little trading point for the ranchmen and stockmen in that vicinity.

During the month of December, 1914, George Davis took a census of the town for the purpose of determining whether there was a sufficient number of electors there to incorporate, and on February 3, 1915, he appeared before the board of county commissioners in Casper with a survey map, a census of the proposed town, an application signed by 218 people who resided in the proposed territory of the town, asking that the place be incorporated. The board of commissioners ordered that C. W. Kittle, C. E. DeGroot and W. I. Lewis be appointed inspectors and that they call an election at some convenient time, and that they perform such other duties as are imposed upon the inspectors as provided by law in such cases.

The election was held on February 27, 1915, when sixty votes were cast in favor of the incorporation and two votes were cast against incorporating. The election of town officers occurred on March 22, when D. H. Ralston was elected mayor; C. W. Kittle, T. A. Hall, W. I. Lewis and C. E. DeGroot, councilmen. The first meeting of the town council was held March 23, in the parlors of the Big Horn hotel, and the following is a list of the officers appointed: J. L. Marquis, marshal; Mrs. C. W. Kittle, clerk; Mrs. W. I. Lewis, treasurer; J. R. Mitchell, police magistrate.

A big dance was given in the evening at the school house by the mayor and councilmen, and at midnight a sumptuous banquet was served at the Big Horn hotel by Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Marquis, there being about sixty guests present.

The *Arminto Flockmaster*, a four-page weekly newspaper, was issued March 17, 1915, and for several months thereafter it came forth with the local news of the town, but like its many predecessors, after the newness had worn off, interest waned, the advertising diminished and then the *Flockmaster* failed to appear and it was no more.

At the time the town was incorporated it had two general stores, the Wolton Commercial company, with C. W. Kittle as manager; the Arminto store, owned by J. B. Okie, managed by F. H. Harper; a twenty-five-room hotel, owned and operated by J. L. Marquis; one

rooming house, owned by W. I. Lewis, one saloon, a billiard hall, a restaurant, one blacksmith shop, a livery stable, a school house, two wool warehouses, railroad depot and section house, stock yards, sheep shearing pens and numerous substantial residences.

### THE TOWN OF MILLS

The town of Mills, located about two miles west from the city of Casper, is the second largest town in Natrona county and was the third town in the county to be incorporated. The land upon which it is situated is described as the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter of section 7, township 33 north, range 79 west of the sixth principal meridian, and was homesteaded by Charles M. Hawks on December 21, 1906. Mr. Hawks sold the land to the Mills Construction company in 1919, and this company put up some buildings on the land where headquarters were established for their construction works. It was then known as the Mills-Baker addition to the city of Casper. Engineering work preparatory to the platting of the land into town lots was commenced on April 3, 1919, by John B. Cleary, under the direction of James Mills, William Mills, Thomas Mills and Floyd E. Pendell, who were the officers of the Mills Construction company.

On account of the desirable location, it being situated immediately north of the Platte river and on the Northwestern railway line, many people bought town lots and established for themselves homes, and in the fall of 1920 the village had a population of about 500. Then a petition for the incorporation of the town of Mills was filed with the board of county commissioners of Natrona county. Favorable action was taken on the petition, and an election was ordered by the county commissioners, to be held on May 10, 1921. At this election George E. Boyle was the successful candidate against Clyde Riley for mayor, and Fred Hunter, Fred Shackleford, G. W. Lindsay and Michael Kennedy were elected as councilmen. At the first meeting of the new town council, held on May 14, 1921, officers were appointed as follows: Wm. Mills, clerk and treasurer; Floyd E. Pendell, attorney; Luke M. Wilkinson, marshal; W. R. Hunt, police magistrate. No other business was transacted at this meeting.

The first school to be established in Mills was in September, 1920, with Miss Gladys Tharp and Miss Nora Essenpries as teachers. There were about seventy pupils in attendance. During the fall of 1921 a modern six-room brick school building was erected, and during the 1921-22 school year there was an average attendance of 130 pupils, with the following named teachers: R. E. Robertson, princi-



pal; Miss Florence Fowler, grammar department; Miss Gladys Tharp, intermediate; Miss Lillian Larsen, second grade; Miss Nora Essenspries, first grade. The town has two churches, the Free Methodist, with Mrs. Hattie Lambert as pastor in charge, and the Presbyterian, with Rev. James S. McInnes in charge. In connection with each of these churches there is a Sunday school, which is largely attended. The Presbyterians completed their tabernacle, located on the corner of Fifth street and Midwest avenue, in March, 1922, and the church was formally organized and dedicated April 1, 1922. The elders ordained and installed at this meeting were John S. McKnight, John Husted and E. A. Mason. Rev. James S. McInnes of Ouray, Colorado, who was the first regular minister in charge, entered upon his duties September 4, 1922.

The Mills postoffice was established August 13, 1921, with Thomas J. Bassett as postmaster. The mail is delivered in the town daily by special service from Casper. At the beginning there were about twenty-five pounds of mail each day, but within a year's time it had increased to more than 100 pounds daily.

The Mills Volunteer fire department was organized in January, 1922, with Walter Stewart as chief; H. B. Brakebill, financial secretary; Julian Hanson, recording secretary, and G. W. Lindsley, treasurer. It was provided that any man living in the town should be a member of this organization.

The Mills Booster club was organized October 9, 1921, with the following named officers: John McKnight, president; Mrs. Edith Elliott, secretary; D. McDaniels, treasurer.

The town hall and town jail, a two-story concrete building, was finished in April, 1922. Town council meetings and other meetings of a public nature are held in the upper rooms of this building and the ground floor is used for obstreperous violators of the town ordinances and those who do not conform to the laws of the state and nation.

The regular town election held on May 9, 1922, was of particular importance and interest to the residents of the town of Mills, for the proposition was submitted of voting bonds in the amount of \$70,000 to provide a system of water works for the town. Mayor Boyle and his associate councilmen favored the bonds, but there was some opposition, as there usually is in such matters, and Mrs. Florence E. McKane was the opposition's candidate for mayor, and G. L. Elmore and R. J. Beaver were the candidates for the council who were opposed to the bonds, while George E. Boyle, G. W. Lindsley and Fred T. Shackelford were the candidates for mayor and councilmen who favored the bonds, the latter being re-elected by a vote of more



than three to one, and the \$70,000 water bonds proposition received about the same vote in its favor.

With the splendid advantages and the progressive spirit of a majority of the people who have made the town of Mills their abiding place the town is destined to become a city that Natrona county may well be proud of. On May 7, 1922, the \$70,000 bonds were sold and on June 15, bids were opened for the construction of the water system. Nine bids were received, the highest bid being \$96,000 and the lowest \$62,900, the latter bid being by the Mills Construction company. Work was commenced on the system in the summer of 1922 and was completed in December.

On May 25, 1921, the Mills Construction company was granted a franchise to supply the town of Mills with electric lights and power but the franchise was turned over to the Natrona Power company of Casper and light and power, both day and night, was furnished the new town at once.

The Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph company on October 26, 1921, was granted a franchise to erect poles, string wires and do all other things necessary for the establishment of telephone service in the town, and during the month of June, 1922, service was established in the business houses and residences, connections being made from the central office in Casper.

R. E. Wertz of the Producers and Refinery company on October 27, 1921, was granted a franchise to furnish the town with gas for heating purposes, and during the early fall of 1922 this company extended its pipe line through the town and supplied gas to those who desired it. The Producers company has built a large reducing plant along the Yellowstone Highway, just north of the town of Mills.

During the first three years the town enjoyed a very substantial growth in population and many creditable business buildings and modern dwellings have been erected, among which may be mentioned a splendid three-story hotel, an up-to-date moving picture house, concrete block postoffice building, McGillivery's store building, Boyle's store building, the Brakebill store building, McKnight's store building, and many others. There is also a splendid swimming pool in the town, with 135 dressing rooms in the building. The pool is 126x143 feet, and is liberally patronized by the people of Casper.

## TEAPOT TOWN

Teapot, located on section 3, township 38, range 79, about thirty-six miles north of Casper, on the Casper-Salt Creek highway, was added to the map of Natrona county on August 11, 1922, when

the Teapot Development company placed on the market 1,040 town lots, which had been surveyed and platted as a townsite. The land comprising this townsite, consisting of 160 acres, was originally filed upon by John Beaton as a homestead, and is one of the very few pieces of land inside of the Teapot oil structure upon which a patent had been issued with no royalty restrictions. The officers of the townsite company were C. M. Elgin, president; V. E. Stanley, vice-president, and George F. Stenberg, secretary-treasurer. The oil structure surrounding this townsite is being developed by the Mammoth Oil company for the naval reserve of the United States government, and during 1922 a number of producing wells were brought in, the quality and quantity of oil being equal to any of the producing wells in the Salt Creek field.

An office for the Teapot townsite company and several other buildings were erected during the month of June, 1922, but the sale of the town lots did not commence until August 11, and after the first three days of the sale the company reported that 275 lots had been contracted for, and three months later a total of 903 lots had been disposed of, with 137 remaining unsold. A supply store and several other business houses were established at once, and the town of Teapot is now a substantial and flourishing oil camp town.

### THE TOWN OF EVANSVILLE

The town of Evansville, on the Yellowstone highway, three miles east from Casper, is the newest town in Natrona county, but by no means of the least importance. The sale of Evansville town lots was commenced in March, 1922, and on August 10 the entire group of lots, consisting of 222, had been sold, with the exception of one. The demand for lots in the new town was so great that an addition of 137 lots were platted adjoining the original townsite on the west, and placed on the market. This addition is to have all the utilities of the original townsite extending to it. The prospects for the town to further expand soon became so encouraging that in the fall of 1922, addition number two, with eighty-two lots, was platted immediately north of the original townsite and put on the market.

The tracks of the Burlington and Northwestern railways pass immediately by the town, and each of these railway companies have promised that passenger and freight depots will soon be erected, and that Evansville shall be a station where all the trains will make a stop. The Evansville Water company, with a capitalization of \$100,000, with L. H. Sennett, H. G. Taylor and E. H. Banta as incorporators, was organized in September, and arrangements have been made with

the Guaranteed Investment company, with T. J. Diamond as president; Dr. J. E. Beal, vice-president, and P. H. Smith, secretary-treasurer, to furnish the water and complete a sewer system to the business portion and residential section of the town. The Natrona Power company has extended its electric lighting service from Casper to the new town and the telephone company will establish an exchange there probably during the summer of 1923; arrangements are being made for gas service for all the residences and business houses. A number of store buildings, apartment houses and dwelling houses were completed during the summer and fall of 1922 and the Baptist church was also built late in the fall. This church building was equipped with school furniture, and on January 2, 1923, school was opened, with an enrollment of twenty pupils, with Daniel C. Adler as teacher. The Texas company's refining plant (which is described in this volume under the heading of "Oil Fields and Refineries"), is immediately east of the town, and was completed to such extent that fire was placed under the stills and the production of gasoline and refined oils was commenced in February, 1923, and a great many of the employees at this plant have bought lots and established homes in the new town. The fact that the refinery was built here was the incentive for the sale of the lots so rapidly and the cause of the wonderful boom that has taken place, and which, in the not distant future, will put Evansville on the map as one of the leading towns in Central Wyoming.

At the beginning of the year 1923 Evansville had an estimated population of 150, exclusive of the refinery workers who make their homes in Casper. About sixty dwelling houses, fifteen business houses and one church comprised the buildings of the town at the beginning of the year 1923. Among the business houses in the new town were the Evansville garage, a filling station and grocery store combined, three pool halls, three restaurants, two grocery stores, one gents' furnishing goods store, three rooming and boarding houses, one furniture and hardware store, one second-hand furniture exchange, a barber shop and a lumber yard.

## Our Oil Fields and Oil Refineries

UNLIKE the streets of the New Jerusalem, the streets of the city of Casper are not paved with gold, but richer than the gold mines of California, in the qualities of usefulness and convenience to the human race, are the oil wells in Natrona county, which have spouted forth their liquid treasures from the bowels of the earth, bringing forth untold wealth to many men and making land that was considered almost valueless worth millions of dollars, and creating, almost as if by magic, new, vast and profitable industries, and well-nigh realizing the wildest conceptions of sudden and golden fortune found in Arabian legends. But with all the fortunes that have been made from the oil fields in Natrona county the reports that have been sent out were greatly exaggerated. If a man invested one thousand dollars in an oil prospect and received in return ten thousand dollars on his investment, by the time the report had traveled a thousand miles the fortune had risen to a hundred thousand dollars, and the farther the report traveled the larger the fortune had grown, and when one well with a 500-barrel production was brought in, by the time the report had gone a thousand miles the number of wells had reached at least a dozen, and each of these dozen wells was producing at least two thousand barrels of oil each day. The many, many dry holes and non-producing wells that were drilled, and the many, many thousands of dollars that were lost were not broadcasted as were the producing wells that were brought in, and the many, many people who lost their hard-earned money in drilling for oil received no publicity; it was only the successful enterprises and prosperous men that were so extensively advertised.

The original oil prospectors of Central Wyoming had the right idea of the wonderful oil fields that surrounded Casper, but only a few of them lived to enjoy the benefits to be derived from the flowing wells. Very different from the original prospectors were the men of the new type who assisted in the development of the oil fields in this part of the country and who made for themselves vast fortunes. Many of them were amateurs in the oil game; there were lawyers, doctors, merchants, ministers and men in all walks of life who were chafing under their lot and were dissatisfied with the returns from their avocations, and they put into a pool what money they could raise for the drilling of a well. If their first well was a producer,

another and another well was drilled until the field was fairly covered with derricks. It was not so with the old prospector. He would locate his land, dig a prospect hole and do such other development work as was required by law to hold the land, and there his development work ended, for the reason that he did not have sufficient capital to drill down to the oil sand, and even though he did get a producing well, there was no demand for his product.

The fur traders and trappers probably were the original discoverers of oil in what is now Central Wyoming, but when the discovery was made cannot be stated. The first record made of its discovery was in 1832, when Captain Bonneville was on his exploring expedition. In regard to the finding of oil by Captain Bonneville, we quote the following from Washington Irving's "Adventures of Captain Bonneville":

"There appeared to be no soil favorable for vegetation, nothing but coarse gravel; yet, all over this isolated, barren landscape, were diffused such atmospherical tints and hues, as to blend the whole into harmony and beauty. In this neighborhood the captain made search for the 'great tar springs,' one of the wonders of the mountains; the medical properties of which, he had heard extravagantly lauded by the trappers.<sup>1</sup> After a toilsome search he found it at the foot of a sand-bluff, a little to the east of the Wind River mountains, [near the Popo Agie river] where it exuded in a small stream of the color and consistency of tar. The men immediately hastened to collect a quantity of it to use as an ointment for the galled backs of their horses, and as a balsam for their own pains and aches. From the description given of it, it is evidently the bituminous oil, called petroleum or naphtha, which forms a principal ingredient in the potent medicine called British Oil. It is found in various parts of Europe and Asia, in several of the West India islands, and in some places of the United States. In the state of New York it is called Seneca Oil, from being found near Seneca lake."

It is said that Cy Iba found oil oozing out of the ground in the Seminoe mountain country in the fall of 1851. Mr. Iba was then in the company of Kit Carson, Jim Bridger and Cimineau Lajeunesse. Mr. Iba said that the half-breeds sold this oil to the emigrants for axle grease. It was also applied to sores on the feet of horses and cattle. Mr. Iba went westward with the tide of emigration, going first to Alaska. Afterwards he mined in California, and the western territories, bringing up in the Black Hills in 1875, where he was one of the original discoverers of placer gold. In 1882 he again visited the Seminoe oil springs and made a number of locations there. He also located numerous claims in the Salt Creek field, one of which is the famous "Iba Eighty." Although a considerable number of locations had been made on oil lands in the central part of Wyoming in the early '80's, nothing much was done toward the development

<sup>1</sup>Inasmuch as Captain Bonneville had been informed of the existence of these "great tar springs" which had been "lauded by the trappers," he cannot properly be given credit for the discovery of them, as some historians have done.



of the fields until several years later. It was in January, 1889, that the oil fields of Wyoming commenced to attract attention of the people in the east, and the *Casper Mail* thus tells of these fields:

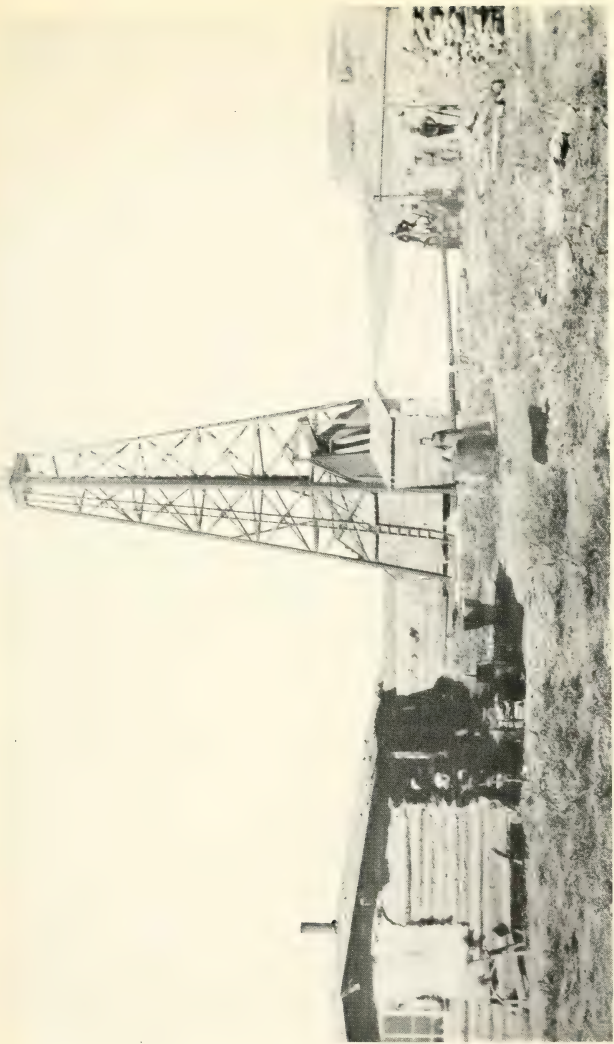
"To the west of Casper are the Poison Spider, Rattlesnake, Popo Agie and Argo oil basins; on the north are the Salt Creek, South Fork of Powder river, and Big Horn basins. The Popo Agie is the only basin that has been extensively tested, there being in this basin three wells, the aggregate flow of which is 600 barrels per day, therefore forever settling the question of oil in paying quantities in Wyoming. The surface indications in this basin consist of oil springs, which is the case in all of them; the Salt Creek basin, however, showing more indications on the surface than any of the other basins, and in formation and topography being a facsimile of the Popo Agie basin. There are some who are skeptical regarding these oil fields, but the verdict of those who have investigated them is that the half has not been told. There are springs in various localities that flow all the way from one gallon to ten barrels per day. It is by these springs that the various basins are marked, and it is by these springs that the oil belt of Wyoming is traced for more than two hundred miles."

The first drilling for oil in Natrona county was commenced in the fall of 1888, the location of the well being about three miles northwest from Casper. It was called the "Casper Well," and on March 15, 1889, the *Casper Weekly Mail* announced that "the reported oil strike at the Casper well last week is still shrouded in mystery. Work has been stopped and everything at the derrick locked up, the workmen claiming that the two-inch cable is broken and the drill at the bottom of the well. It is a noticeable fact that the manager and his men have been locating oil claims ever since the 'break' occurred. Oil men in this vicinity are convinced that oil has been found, and considerable excitement prevails. It is hoped that by the next issue of the *Mail*, some definite information can be given. The managers at the well stoutly deny the report that oil has been struck at the derrick."

In May, 1889, the Blair Oil and Mining company located on 3,200 acres of land known as the Oil Mountain Springs, about thirty miles west of Casper, on Poison Spider creek, and it was said that drilling for oil would be commenced just as soon as 5,000 shares of the stock could be sold at \$2.00 per share. The 5,000 shares of stock were not sold and consequently the well was not drilled.

On June 7, 1889, a total of ninety filings were made on oil lands in Natrona county, covering more than 14,000 acres. Most of this land was in the Salt Creek field, and the names of the locators were: Ernest Riall, Russell J. Straight, Albert M. Kitchen, Daniel H. Dorsett, Ernest V. Johnson, Charles P. Collins, Frank A. Hecht, W. E. Hawley and P. M. Shannon. These were eastern people, and the filing on the land caused a great deal of enthusiasm among the people of Casper. In the fall of that year the active oil operations in Natrona county were two rigs near Ervay, one at Bessemer and a new





FIRST OIL DERRICK IN THE SALT CREEK (SHANNON) FIELD, ERECTED IN 1889



outfit being taken to Salt Creek (now known as the Shannon field). Operations on the "Casper well" had not yet been resumed.

The drilling of the first well in the Salt Creek field was commenced by the Pennsylvania Oil & Gas company in the fall of 1889. The drillers had considerable trouble in getting this well down to the oil-bearing sand owing to the fact that the formation was a great deal different from that in the Pennsylvania fields, where the drillers came from. The hole first caved in and after this trouble was remedied large boulders were encountered, which threw the drill to one side, and caused a crooked hole, and this stopped operations until the following February. George B. McCalmont, vice-president of the company, came to Casper in the spring of 1890 and took charge of the drilling operations. Other members of the company were: P. M. Shannon of Pittsburgh, president; and C. P. Collins and R. J. Straight, both of Bradford, Pennsylvania.

In the summer of 1890 there was a great deal of activity in the oil fields in this part of the state and on June 26 the *Wyoming Derrick*, published in Casper, made the following announcement:

"If there is any one of the many resources of this territory of greater importance than another, and calculated to bring it into immediate general notice, it is the immense oil deposits being opened up. The country is dotted over with surface indications in every direction. The oil-producing belt extends diagonally across the territory from the northeast corner to the extreme southwest. Work of development in the Salt Creek and Powder River basins, in the southern part of Johnson county, shows the deposit to cover an area—in these districts alone—more than double in extent the entire Pennsylvania fields, and a product far richer than that of any other oil region known to the world. Chemical investigation demonstrates that the oils of these basins possess both lubricating and illuminating qualities.

"E. H. French last week located oil lands for nearly every business man in Casper. People here, realizing the true value of the oil fields perhaps better than any one else, are putting all the money they can spare into oil lands. Can the public at large ask for any better evidence of the genuineness of our oil fields and the value thereof?"

The first well to be brought in by the Pennsylvania company was on June 30, 1890, at a depth of 1,090 feet, which proved to be a good producer. As soon as the well came in the derrick was fenced and guarded, and no one allowed to approach it. All those who were connected with the company denied that oil had been found, but in spite of this denial the fact was out and the denials had no effect upon the minds of the people, but it was the middle of October before

the oil company officials would admit they had oil, the reason given for the denial being that they wanted to be sure of a clear title to the land.

The oil was sent to Pittsburgh for analysis, and it was a great surprise, not only to members of the company, but to all the chemists who made a test of it. The chemists declared that the product could not be a natural mineral from the ground, for, they declared, no such oil had ever been found in the world. They said this oil must have been compounded with animal oils, and the members of the company had been deceived by some one who had compounded it and sent samples to them, but when President Shannon assured them that it was the natural crude oil, just as it came from the ground, the chemists said that nature had done more for this oil in the ground than the best and latest refining and compounding processes had done for other oils. This oil sold for ten dollars a barrel. The report of the chemists decided the company to drill other wells and develop the Salt Creek field. The drilling of the second well was commenced in 1891, but proved a failure, having had bad luck with the hole and failing to go down deep enough to reach the oil. The second hole caved at a depth of about 500 feet, and they got what is called a flat hole, and then a crooked hole, so crooked that the tools would not go down, and thus the second hole was abandoned.

The drilling of the third well was commenced in 1892, and the oil sand was reached in due time. In 1893-4-5 and '96 wells numbers 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 were brought in, and they were all good producers. All these wells were within a mile of each other and their depth ranged from 600 to 1,100 feet.

In the fall of 1894 the Union Pacific, Denver and Gulf Railway company ordered a car load of this oil as a sample and it gave such satisfaction that the company used it exclusively as a lubricant for a number of years, and for five months this railroad company used the crude oil without it even being strained, there being no refinery here at that time.

The oil was hauled from the fields to Casper in tanks by string teams. These teams would haul supplies to the field and return with a load of oil. A description of these string teams is thus given by a local newspaper at that time: "Two string teams were loaded out from here with 26,000 pounds of piping. One of the teams was made up with sixteen head of horses and four wagons and when the wagons were coupled out to receive the piping, the entire outfit occupied a space of ground 240 feet long, and was the longest string outfit which ever went out of Casper. The company now has five teams on the road, two of four horses, one of ten, one of twelve, and one of sixteen."



Casper's First Oil Refinery, Located South of the C. & N. W. Ry. Tracks, Just East from Where the Electric Light Plant  
is Now Located. Built in 1885





Early in the year of 1895 F. J. Carman, a chemist and refiner, erected a small refinery for the Pennsylvania company in Casper, just east from where the Natrona Power company's plant is now located, and railroad oils, dynamo and other lubricating oils were refined. The fires were started under the stills of this refinery on the 5th of March, 1895. The plant had a capacity of from fifty to one hundred barrels of finished oils each day, the product being valve, engine and car oil, the company confining itself to the manufacture of lubricating oils only.

The company had stored in tanks in the field 4,000 barrels of the crude oil, and 2,000 barrels of the refined product were stored in Casper which was kept ready for shipment to its customers on short notice in case of an emergency.

By this time the oil fields in this part of the country were attracting so much attention, that metropolitan newspapers were sending representatives here for the purpose of making an investigation of the fields and publishing a description of them.

On the 4th of April, 1895, the announcement was made that "sixty barrels of refined engine oil had been shipped from the refinery the past week, for which the company received \$14.00 per barrel, net." From six to ten men were employed at the refinery, which included the office force and the workmen at the plant. For two years the business was carried on with but few changes in the plant, but in July, 1897, the company's business had increased to such proportions that a new still of 150-barrel capacity was installed and a car load of steel drums in which to ship the refined product was purchased.

For the month of August, 1902, the company's pay roll amounted to \$5,200, which included the drillers and other workmen in the field, the freighters and the men at the refinery; this also included the office force, and it was remarked at the time by one of the local newspapers, "this means much, indeed, to our town and community." At that time well number 13 was being drilled and when it was brought in it was estimated that there would be a daily output of about forty-five barrels, but it was announced that the company would continue drilling wells until there would be an output of 100 barrels daily.

The people of Casper were very proud of the oil refinery and boasted that "it was the only oil refinery in the state." When the town was honored by distinguished visitors, such as our United States senators, congressman, governor or any of the state officers, who were candidates for re-election, and who usually came to see us just before election time, a delegation of prominent citizens never failed to pilot them through the refinery, and explain to them all the details of how the oil was produced from its crude state to the refined

product. In making the rounds through the refinery, which required about forty-five minutes, the visitors generally emerged with their shoes covered with oil and their clothing somewhat soiled, but the residents were used to it and it did not seem to bother the distinguished visitors.

In the fall of 1902 three string teams were making regular trips to the oil fields from Casper, hauling out supplies and bringing in the oil, and on account of the increased production from the new wells six new tanks, with a capacity of ninety barrels each, were built and taken out to the field to store the oil.

In 1900 and 1901, nearly a million acres of land in Natrona county was withdrawn from agricultural entry by the United States land commissioner which was classed as oil land. Two special agents had been in this territory a number of months making an investigation of the land and they recommended the withdrawal of the land. Four hundred thousand acres of land in the Salt Creek country was included in the segregation. Stockmen and ranchmen in the county made a vigorous protest against the segregation, claiming that not one-fourth of the land withdrawn was oil-bearing land; that the assessment work on most of the "oil" land consisted of hauling a few loads of rock in the road and of dragging a rail over the sagebrush, and then making an affidavit that honest assessment work had been done, and that the oil men were not trying to develop the country, but they were acquiring the land for speculative purposes. On March 28, 1903, the land commissioners, acting upon a petition from Natrona county, signed by more than two-thirds of the taxpayers, restored to entry all the oil lands in Natrona county excepting the area upon which actual development work had been done by the Pennsylvania Oil & Gas company.

The Société Belgo-American des Petroles du Wyoming early in November, 1903, bought all the holdings in Wyoming of the Pennsylvania Oil & Gas company, the property consisting of the refinery in Casper, fourteen producing wells and 105,000 acres of oil land in the Salt Creek field. The price paid was \$600,000. The deal was made through J. H. Lobell of Chicago. In less than a month after the deal was consummated the new company announced that it would build a railroad from Cheyenne to Lander and from Casper to Salt Creek. The Casper town council on February 27, 1904, granted to the Belgo-American company forty acres of land within the corporate limits of the town, or adjacent thereto, suitable for an oil refinery, and the proposed railroad to be built by the same company was granted a right-of-way through the corporate limits of the town for all railroad and depot grounds that the company desired to use in the construc-



HAYING. SUPPLIES FROM CASPER TO THE SALT CREEK OIL FIELDS, 1900



tion and maintenance of the road and depots. And in the event the company established an oil refinery in Casper the town council agreed to give the company, without cost, so much of the town's surplus water as might be necessary for the use of the refinery and all the buildings in connection therewith, and the company's property was to be exempt from all municipal tax for a period of ten years.

The survey for the railroad was made from Cheyenne to Lander. Lander people also wanted the refinery built in that town, and made fully as liberal inducements as Casper had made. Some of the officers of the company made a visit to Casper during the summer and they were feasted and entertained as only the best people of Casper could provide. From Casper the delegation proceeded on its way to Lander. The trip was made in buggies over the route of the proposed railroad. The telephone poles for a distance of three miles outside of Lander were decorated with flags and bunting. A delegation of Lander citizens, headed by a brass band, met the oil company officers at the three-mile station and escorted them into the town. The streets of the town had been cleaned, the buildings decorated and everything was in holiday attire. The officers of the company were fêted lavishly, and the many advantages were pointed out why the refinery should be built there. The officers of the company made no promises to either Casper or Lander, but took note of all that was said and offered and then suggested that Orin Junction was a very desirable location for a refinery and a splendid location for a modern city, such as would be builded, wherever the refinery might be located.

For more than a year the people of Casper and Lander were on the anxious seat; both towns continued to offer the best they had if the company would decide upon their town as the place to build the refinery; but, alas, the company decided upon neither Casper, Lander or Orin Junction as the place to build its refinery, but on account of some irregularities and financial difficulties it was compelled to decide that it would build neither a refinery nor a railroad. Some of the members of the company were arrested for fraud and others lost their standing for honesty in the community in which they lived, and the hopes and dreams of the people of Casper, Lander and Orin Junction were blasted, so far as having a new refinery and a new railroad were concerned. Casper was content with having the "only oil refinery in the state," and Lander was compelled to get along as best it could without a refinery or a railroad and Orin Junction abandoned hope of ever being an oil town. But on account of the alleged irregularities and chicanery of some of the members of the Belgo-American company, who bought the property of the Pennsylvania Oil & Gas company, and the intricacies of the law, all operations at the refinery in

Casper were soon suspended and the plant was out of commission until the summer of 1907, when the business men of the town considered it a menace and fire trap, and signed a petition requesting the town council to order it removed and that the oil pond adjacent to the refinery be filled with earth. Although the town council made an order in compliance with the request of the petitioners, the old refinery remained inoperative and undisturbed and the oil pond was not filled up.

Early in the year of 1910 the Franco-Wyoming Oil company was incorporated, and secured through purchase all the lands, properties and assets of every kind of the Belgo-American company. New capital and new men were put in to manage the affairs of the company. John M. Thurston of Nebraska was the attorney, and W. G. Young, an American, from the east, was the field manager, with headquarters in Casper. The principal stockholders of the Franco-Wyoming company were Douglas Read, president Banque Intermediare of Paris and director of the Credit Foncier of France; Count Puytonaine of Paris, ex-U. S. Senator John M. Thurston of Nebraska, Judge Mayer and Rudolph Mayer of Philadelphia, and Ernest F. Ayerault of New York City. With the new officers and new capital this company commenced operations at once to develop its Salt Creek property and on April 8, 1910, the first shipment of drilling machinery arrived in Casper and was immediately taken out to Salt Creek where the drilling for oil was commenced. Work was continued in the field during the summer and fall and up into the winter until the cold weather caused the company to cease operations, but work was resumed early in the spring. The company had decided to build a refinery in Casper for the purpose of refining the oil that was produced from the twenty wells or more that had been drilled and a pipe line was to be built from Salt Creek to Casper. The town of Casper by an act of the town council leased to the company twenty acres of land immediately east from Highland cemetery where a refinery was to be built. There were a few people of Casper who objected to this property being leased for refinery or for any other except cemetery purposes, and it was proposed to get out an injunction preventing the company from occupying the ground, but the principal objections were mysteriously removed and work on the refinery was commenced in the summer of 1911. It was announced that this refinery would have a daily capacity of 5,000 barrels. Work progressed rather slowly at this refinery, and it was on June 11, 1912, when the fires were first started under the stills. This refinery was owned by the Natrona Pipe Line and Refinery company, which was a subsidiary of the Franco-Wyoming company.



On June 17, 1911, a resolution was again adopted by the Casper town council ordering that the old refinery situated in the town of Casper, between Center and Wolcott streets, south of the C. & N. W. railway tracks, be removed on account of the building being dangerous and unsafe; that it was readily exposed to fire, and should it catch on fire, other property in that vicinity was in great danger of being destroyed. The Franco-Wyoming company at once removed the building and machinery, and the city filled up the pond of sludge which was an eye-sore and a nuisance, and thus was removed all evidence of the first oil refinery in the state of Wyoming, of which in the early days Casper was the proud possessor.

The Midwest Oil company was incorporated early in the year of 1910, with Oliver H. Shoup, president, and Verner Z. Reed, Karl Schuyler, H. M. Blackmer, R. D. Brooks and Bern Hopkins his associates. This company had acquired considerable land in the Salt Creek field and was a rival of the Franco-Wyoming company. The Midwest company was very active in drilling wells and building a refinery west of Casper and a pipe line and telephone line from Salt Creek to Casper. The first car load of pipe for the pipe line arrived in Casper May 25, 1911, and by the first of December, 1911, the company had expended \$650,000 for the purposes above named. Twelve producing wells had been brought in, the pipe line and pumping stations were complete, the telephone line was in operation, many storage tanks were in place and the refining plant was far advanced, and on January 15, 1912, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, the fire was turned on under one still, the machinery was put in operation and the production of gasoline, naphtha, kerosene, gas oil and fuel oil was commenced. It was announced that in several weeks other stills would be ready and the capacity of the plant would be 3,000 barrels per day when the plant was completed. Arrangements had been made with the Union Tank Car company for twelve tank cars to transport the product to market. The Midwest company had rented three office rooms on the second floor in the Kimball building on Center street, where the business of the company was transacted until the 14th of April, 1914, when they moved to their new quarters in the Midwest (now the Henning) hotel, which comprised eleven rooms on the second floor. These offices were maintained until early in the spring of 1917, when the top floor, consisting of twenty-five office rooms in the Oil Exchange (now the Consolidated Royalty) building were occupied. But even these commodious quarters, in addition to the offices of the company at the refinery in this city and those in the First National Bank building in Denver, were soon outgrown and on March 7, 1921, the company moved into the Midwest Refining company building on

Second and Wolcott streets, occupying the two top floors, consisting of sixty-six rooms, a three-story administration building was erected at the refining plant, where splendid offices were maintained, and additional offices were required in Denver where the head offices were maintained.

The Midwest Oil company and the Franco-Petroleum company (the latter having been merged from the Franco-Wyoming company and the Natrona Pipe Line and Refining company) were merged on February 28, 1914, and the new company was capitalized at \$20,000,000, under the name of the Midwest Refining company. At this time the new company had a total daily charging capacity of 12,800 barrels and a boiler capacity of 1,875 horsepower. Improvements were made and equipment was added continually, and five years later, or on January 1, 1920, the total still charging capacity of the plant was 46,900 barrels per day, and there were under construction at that time stills which would charge an additional 12,000 barrels, which would give the company a total still charging capacity of 58,900 barrels. The boiler capacity of the plant at that time was 14,000 horsepower. The capacity of the storage and operating tanks amounted to approximately 2,500,000 barrels. At the loading racks 200 cars could be loaded at one time. Fourteen hundred men were employed at the refinery in Casper by the Midwest company on January 1, 1920, in addition to the several hundred men in the offices here and four or five hundred more at the fields in Salt Creek, Big Muddy and the other fields near by. In addition to the refinery at Casper, the Midwest company was operating a refinery at Gray Bull with a daily still charging capacity of 3,000 barrels and one at Laramie with a daily still charging capacity of 4,800 barrels.

During the summer months of 1922 contracts were let by the Midwest company for the building of eighty-six storage tanks of 80,000 barrels capacity each, and in December a contract was let for the building of forty more tanks of the same capacity, and negotiations were also being made at the same time for the building of thirty more 80,000-barrel tanks, but without the construction of the latter thirty tanks, when all the containers have been completed that have been contracted for the company will have tankage capacity for the storage of approximately fourteen million barrels of crude oil at its tank farm on the north side of the Platte river within two miles northwest from the city of Casper. It was by mere chance that the people who organized the Midwest Oil company, which later became the Midwest Refining company, became interested in the Salt Creek field and built its refinery in Casper. Very little work had been done in the territory where the hundreds of producing wells are now located

in the summer of 1910 when Bern Hopkins and A. M. Johnson of Colorado Springs, who were in the employ of Verner Z. Reed, stopped over night at the Henshaw and Fitzhugh camp in Salt Creek while making the trip with a team and buggy from Casper to Sheridan. E. T. Williams was in charge of the camp at that time and he was doing some validating work for Henshaw and Fitzhugh, who had located upon all the land they possibly could. This land was about five miles south of the Shannon field, and the first development work done here was by a company under the title of the Petroleum Machippij Salt Creek, The Hague, Holland, who had brought in a producing well in 1908 at a depth of 1,000 feet, but on account of there being no means of transportation to a refinery except by teams and wagons, there was no demand for the product, and the well was practically abandoned. (The Machippij company and the Franco-Wyoming company in 1910 were consolidated, and took the name of the Wyoming Oil Fields company.) Then came Henshaw and Fitzhugh in 1910 who were doing their validating work by the spring pole method. While stopping over night at the Henshaw camp, Messrs. Hopkins and Johnson became interested in the tales told about this oil field, and upon their return from Sheridan they again stopped at the oil camp and then arranged with E. T. Williams to lease the "Middy" claim, the lease being in the name of Bern Hopkins as trustee for Verner Z. Reed and associates, which later became the Reed Investment company. This company drilled its first well on 11-39-79, and at a depth of 1,860 feet produced a water well. Oliver H. Shoup, who was office manager for Mr. Reed, in company with Bern Hopkins, then made a trip to Paris where they interested some French capitalists in this field and development work progressed until it was a proven field and the men interested in the company were made millionaires. During the progress of this development work a great many conflicts arose as to title of the lands. Line riders were hired by the several companies and many a contest was the result. These line riders were men of nerve and they put up a fight for their companies equal to the fights on the range made in the earlier days by the cowboys for what they considered their rights. That many a strip of land was acquired by might, rather than right, there is no question. It was generally the stronger forces that won, and oftentimes men and material were moved off a claim which was settled upon by the stronger faction. Some of these combats among the employees of the different companies resulted in a hasty visit of the sheriff and a number of deputies to the battle ground, and a great deal of expensive litigation resulted before the ownership of considerable of the land was settled, but with all the contests, conflicts and litigation, the

Midwest in ten years grew from a very small concern to a fifty million dollar corporation, and at the time it was absorbed by the Standard Oil company it was the dominating influence of the mountain states oil industry.

In the spring of 1913 the Standard Oil company of Indiana decided to build a refinery in Casper, but the officers of the company did not announce the fact from the house tops. Agents for the company came here and went over the ground very thoroughly before a move was made that would indicate that the company intended coming here to do business. On July 6, 1913, C. B. Manbeck bought from J. M. Carey & Brother eighty-four acres of land in the western limits of Casper. This land was not bought in the name of the Standard Oil company, but in the name of Mr. Manbeck, and the Carey company was not aware that it was for the Standard company until the public announcement was made. The price paid for the land was \$24,000, or a fraction less than \$300 per acre. The only stipulation in the contract was that the property should not be laid out in town lots or additions to the town of Casper and should not be used for residential purposes for at least ten years after the filing of the deed. No doubt the Standard company would have paid \$1,000 per acre for the land if the Carey company had demanded that price.

The announcement that the Standard company would build a refinery on the property acquired by Mr. Manbeck was not made until July 18, 1913, when articles of incorporation were filed with the secretary of state, with a capital stock of \$30,000,000, the filing fee being \$6,011. The list of the stockholders comprised 550 names. The work of clearing the land for the refinery plant was commenced at once, and on July 22 Mr. Manbeck with a number of construction men arrived in Casper to make the preliminary arrangements for the building of the refinery. The work progressed rapidly under men of experience, and on March 11, 1914, the first unit of the plant was in operation, but a large number of men were employed in the construction and the enlargement of the plant, and improvements and additions have been continually made until the Standard's plant in this city is one of the largest and most modern of any refinery in the United States. In the spring and summer of 1921 this company made improvements and additions to its plant which virtually tripled its producing capacity, and when completed there were in operation 275 pressure stills, eighty coke stills and many other reducing devices that were necessary to handle the oil from the producing fields near Casper. Ten storage tanks, forty feet high and 120 feet in diameter, with a capacity of 85,000 barrels to each tank were built, in addition to which a great many smaller tanks were built. These gave the

company a storage capacity at the refinery in excess of a million barrels of oil, and when this building program was completed the plant was capable of handling 25,000 barrels of oil per day. These improvements were estimated to cost not less than ten million dollars.

On June 3, 1921, a meeting of the stockholders of the Standard company met at Whiting, Indiana, and voted to increase the capital stock of the company from one hundred million dollars to one hundred forty millions. This increase was made in order that the additional stock could be used in exchange for stock of the Midwest Refining company, which was capitalized at twenty million dollars, and on October 1, 1921, the refining plants of the Midwest company passed to the control of the Standard company, the two refineries in Casper and the plants at Gray Bull and Laramie then being under control and operated by the giant and powerful Standard company. The Midwest company, however, continued to operate the producing department as well as the marketing of the product from the refineries.

During the year 1922 the Standard plants on the western outskirts of the city of Casper were operating almost at their full capacity, where in the past they had been operating only at from thirty to sixty per cent of their actual capacity. The cause of the increased production was through an order of two million barrels of gasoline to be shipped to a foreign country. Large shipments were made each month to the Magnolia Oil company at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and from there it is shipped on boats to foreign ports. To fill this order the company sent out on an average two train loads of tank cars each week, each train consisting of about 19,000 barrels of gasoline, with sixty cars to each train. This was in addition to all the other orders for domestic consumption that were filled by the company.

Although, at times, the shipments were somewhat delayed, on account of some changes being made in the specifications, the company came within 100,000 barrels of filling the order during the twelve-month period, and so satisfactory was the service and the product that the contract was renewed to furnish two million barrels during the year of 1923. The renewal of this contract assures a market for the entire output for the number three plant, located immediately west of the city of Casper, and with plants numbered one and two furnishing gasoline for domestic consumption will necessitate the operation of all three plants to their full capacity during the entire year of 1923.

Such progress was made in the manufacture of gasoline during 1922 that from the standpoint of volume of gasoline produced, the Casper refinery of the Standard is the largest plant in the world. During 1922 the Casper plant averaged 1,350,000 barrels of crude run



each month, or approximately 45,000 barrels daily. About 615,000 barrels of gasoline were manufactured each month, while the plants produced also 170,000 barrels of refined oil, or kerosene, monthly. The three plants operated by the Standard in Casper manufactured 30,000 barrels of lubricating oils. Other by-products manufactured included 2,500,000 pounds of paraffin wax each month. In addition, 5,000 tons of coke were made each month. The remainder of the crude except that lost through the process of manufacture found its way into fuel oil, gas oil, asphalt, engine distillate and similar products.

The Producers and Refiners corporation has the largest absorption plant in the world about two miles west from the city of Casper. This plant absorbs the gasoline from the gas which is piped from the Mahoney Dome and the Wertz and Ferris fields. Work was commenced on the erection of this plant in the summer of 1922 and it was finished in December. This plant has a daily capacity for the handling of forty million cubic feet of natural gas, from which it will recover the gasoline before delivering the product to the refineries for fuel. It is estimated that the output of natural gasoline will run from 7,500 to 10,000 gallons daily when the plant is operating at its full capacity.

The Texas company, after several months' conference and negotiation with the Casper Chamber of Commerce and the citizens of Casper, decided on July 7, 1922, to build its refinery three miles east from Casper instead of at Glenrock, where the company had already acquired a tract of land upon which to build its plant. This decision was brought about at a luncheon held by the members of the Chamber of Commerce and officers of the Texas company on the above date when it was pledged that the citizens of Casper would contribute \$50,000 for the purchase of the site, and the Texas company would give in exchange the 500 acres of land near Glenrock upon which it had intended to erect its plant. The Civic Land company was formed, an appraisal committee was appointed and the amount which the business men and property owners of Casper should invest was decided upon. The land owned by the Wyoming Refining company was sold to the Civic Land company at cost, and the Evans Realty company donated 120 acres, thus making the total area of the land for the Texas company's refinery site 640 acres. Within a week the \$50,000 was raised and title to the land was given to the Texas company.

Heavy shipments of material to the new site were made at once, and by the first of August there were 225 men on the pay roll of the Texas company, in addition to 375 men employed on the works through contractors. These men were employed on the railroad



yards and switches, loading yard tracks, the large smoke stacks, brick work for the crude stills, concrete work, the building of hundreds of tanks and the many other things attendant upon the building of a modern oil refining plant. In addition to these 600 men who were working on the refinery plant, there was a large force of carpenters, masons, cement workers and other workmen busy in the erection of business houses, shops and residences in the town of Evansville, which is in close proximity to the refinery.

The Central Pipeline company is the carrier of the crude oil from the Salt Creek field to the Texas company's plant, and on October 8, 1922, the first oil entered the Salt Creek end of the line and within a few days a large stream of the "liquid gold" was flowing into the tanks that had been built to receive it. In February, 1923, fires were started under the stills of the Texas company, and Casper's third large oil refinery was in operation.

Several hundred miles of pipe lines have been built from the oil fields into Casper which are used to transport crude oil, gasoline, gas and water. These pipe lines have been put in at an expense of several millions of dollars, but with all this, new lines are continually being built, which are necessary to transport the product to the refineries. Among the pipe lines coming into Casper are: The Midwest Refining company's forty-two mile six-inch line from Salt Creek to Casper; the same company has two eight-inch forty-two mile lines from Salt Creek to Casper, for the transportation of crude oil, also one three-inch and one four-inch forty-two mile gasoline line and one six-inch forty-two mile water line from Salt Creek to Casper. The Western Pipeline company has an eight-inch forty-five mile line from Salt Creek to Casper and the Central Pipeline company has a forty-five mile eight-inch line from Salt Creek to Casper. The Illinois Pipeline company has a twenty-two mile eight-inch line from Big Muddy to Casper. The New York Oil company has a thirty-eight mile 6-12 pipe line for gas from Poison Spider to Casper; the Producers and Refiners corporation has a ninety-mile 10-14 inch line for gas from the Mahoney Dome to Casper, and the Bolton Oil company has a thirty-two mile six-inch line from Bolton creek to Casper.

In addition to the manufacturing and producing companies mentioned heretofore, there are a great many producing companies maintaining offices in Casper with a large force of men in the field, among them being the Sinclair-Wyoming and the Mammoth Oil company, who are drilling the Teapot dome for the United States navy as well as doing considerable other development work, the Fargo Oil company, the E. T. Williams, the Ohio, the Chappel, Staley Syndicate, Bessemer, Western States, Salt Creek Consolidated,

Wyokans, Kasoming, Elkhorn, Salt Creek Producers, Boston-Wyoming, Marine, Merritt, Fensland, Domino, Mountain and Gulf, Glenrock Oil, Consolidated Royalty, Five Tribes, Royalty and Producers, Carter, Gypsy and many others.

More than half a billion barrels of crude oil were produced in America in 1921, from which 123,000,000 barrels of gasoline were refined, thus it takes nearly four barrels of crude oil to make one barrel of gasoline. There are forty-two gallons of oil in a barrel. Of these 25.6 per cent goes into gasoline; 9.7 per cent kerosene; 47.9 per cent fuel and gas oil; 4.3, lubricating oil; 2.4 wax, coke, and asphalt; 6 per cent miscellaneous and 4.1 per cent loss.

Although a franchise was granted on March 9, 1911, to "B. H. Hopkins, his successors and assigns, for the laying of oil pipe lines in the streets and alleys of the town of Casper, for the purpose of selling, furnishing and distributing petroleum or its products, and gas to consumers within the town of Casper," the first tangible evidence of the residents of Casper being supplied with natural gas was on January 13, 1920, when the New York Oil company, whose headquarters were in Casper, announced that a contract had been let to the Hope Engineering and Supply company to build a gas pipe line from the company's holdings in the Iron Creek-Poison Spider and South Casper creek fields to the city of Casper. The greater part of the line was to be of twelve-inch pipe, with reinforced Dressler couplings to insure the line against gas escaping. In a statement at that time, in reference to supplying the citizens of Casper with gas, Mr. Frank G. Curtis, president of the New York Oil company, said: "To be able to bring this great relief to Casper will forbid the mercenary motive pervading the effort. All we want is a fair return for the investment and operation and the achievement will mark our greatest desire." Upon the franchise being granted by the city council surveys were immediately made for the lines from Casper to the gas fields and the line was completed October 11, 1920, and gas was turned on at the Midwest refinery the next day where it was used in the various processes of refining oil. At that time the company had eight producing gas wells, but the fields had been only partially developed. The first gas well to be brought in at Iron Creek was on December 17, 1917, and the first gas well to be brought in at Poison Spider was December 24, 1917. The gas is brought from the field under a heavy pressure and this pressure is delivered into the city to certain points where regulators that work automatically are placed. These regulators cut down the heavy gas pressure of several hundred pounds to only a few ounces and deliver this low pressure to the city mains from which it feeds direct to the homes and business houses.

These regulators are so built that when anything goes wrong, they immediately shut off all gas so that there is no danger from the gas suddenly failing in the night and then coming on again to cause trouble.

On account of the convenience and economy of gas for fuel, both for industrial and domestic purposes, it was estimated that the city of Casper would experience a rapid growth in population as well as the establishment of many new industries where gas could be used, such as glass factories, iron and asbestos industries and other enterprises. In December, 1920, the first month of the service, more than three hundred million cubic feet of gas was consumed in the city of Casper and at the Midwest Refining company's plant for fuel purposes, and more than 500 applications were on file for connections to be made with residences in the city.

After one year's trial the consumers of gas expressed themselves as being highly pleased with the service, the convenience and the price, and instead of three hundred million cubic feet being consumed in a month, in December, 1921, the company was supplying 2,300 families and twenty factories, laundries, etc., which consumed fifty-three million cubic feet and in addition to this the Standard refineries consumed 542,000,000 cubic feet with a total of 595,000,000 cubic feet consumed during the month, and a total of 6,214,000,000 cubic feet consumed during the year, with an assurance that more than six billion cubic feet for each year would be consumed as long as the company could supply the gas.

In regard to the supply of gas in the fields a careful estimate has been made by geologists of national reputation who estimate that the production in the Iron Creek-Poison Spider fields will furnish more than six billion cubic feet each year for at least twenty years, and with the many other fields adjacent to the city of Casper the citizens may be assured that the supply will not be exhausted for at least a century.

In the whole state of Wyoming there are said to be fifteen light oil structures, producing or capable of producing paraffin base crudes on a par with Pennsylvania oils, the daily production of which is about 78,000 barrels, with several fields shut down and others running only a portion of the oil. The potential production of Wyoming's light oil fields is about 180,000 barrels per day. The cost of development of these fifteen light oil fields up until 1922, was about \$62,872,500, which takes in the cost of edge wells, classing the latter as producers except where no oil whatever was found in the hole. Besides these fifteen light oil fields, there are seven black oil fields with a daily production of 425 barrels, a potential production of 3,750

barrels, a development cost of \$3,448,560 and four fields shut down. There are fourteen gas fields producing in Wyoming and in some instances these gas fields also produce oil. The cost of developing these gas fields up until 1922, was \$4,635,000.

Besides the above listed fields, there are also seven structures in the state where oil in commercial quantities is known to exist. The cost of the development of these seven fields, as nearly as can be estimated, is \$1,778,600. The cost of the development of the producing fields in the state, most of which are in Natrona county and adjacent to the city of Casper, is as follows:

The Midwest Refining company, \$22,768,480, paid out for the drilling of wells on successful structures. The Ohio Oil company, \$18,342,660, expended in the development of successful structures; the Kasoming Oil company, \$2,230,000; Producers and Refiners corporation, \$1,456,900; New York Oil company, \$1,340,000; The Texas company, \$1,322,720; General Petroleum company, \$1,320,500; Sinclair Oil company, \$254,000; Carter Oil company, \$308,000; Union Oil company, \$120,000; and the Inland Oil & Refining company, \$150,000. The rest of the firms operating in Wyoming are listed as miscellaneous and show a total expenditure of \$4,650,000. The above figures are for successful development only, no dry holes are considered. The following figures give an approximate expenditure by each firm on dry holes where the whole amount was a total loss or nearly so: Ohio Oil company, \$2,437,654; Midwest Refining company, \$1,976,000; Kasoming Oil company, \$658,000; Inland Oil & Refining company, \$535,000; The Texas company, \$1,387,530; Producers & Refiners corporation, \$511,000; Associated Oil company, \$445,000; Carter Oil company, \$360,000; Empire Gas & Fuel company, \$210,000; Union Oil company (Calif.), \$1,200,000; Standard Oil of California, \$322,090; Cosden Oil & Gas company, \$110,000; Gypsy Oil company, \$52,330, and miscellaneous companies, \$10,947,690.

The state of Wyoming is credited with one-twentieth of all the oil reserves in the United States. On January 1, 1922, the average daily production from the 225,000 producing wells in the United States was four and one-half barrels, whereas the average daily production in Wyoming was forty barrels. Wyoming leads all other fields in the average daily production of wells. The crude oil of Wyoming has the highest gasoline extraction of any field in the United States, running forty per cent to fifty per cent as compared to twenty-four per cent in the Appalachian and twelve per cent in the California fields. In Wyoming but nine and one-half per cent of the estimated crude in the ground in the first sand has been extracted compared to thirty-five per cent in California, sixty-one per cent in Louisiana, eighty-nine

per cent in the Appalachian fields and thirty-six per cent in the mid-continent fields. Many practical oil men consider the Salt Creek field, the greatest single oil pool of high grade gasoline oil in the United States or even in the world. Certain sections of this wonderful field produced, from 1914 to 1919, 63,500 barrels of oil per acre. With the single exception of Spindle Top in Texas, where the oil is much inferior in quality from the standpoint of gasoline content, this Salt Creek production exceeds that of any other high grade oil field east of the Rocky mountains. The average production in Salt Creek during the last several years has been 19,500 barrels per acre, which average, with the single exception of Spindle Top, is greater than any field east of the Rockies. The Kern river field of California has an average production of 25,698 barrels per acre, but this is low grade oil and not to be compared in quality with Salt Creek. The famous Cushing pool in Oklahoma has an average of 4,350 barrels per acre; the Glen pool a little more than 3,000 barrels per acre; the Augusta, Kansas, pool, 4,800.

During the year 1921 the Salt Creek field produced 11,362,000 barrels of oil. Out of a total of 261 producing oil wells completed in the state of Wyoming during 1921, 120 of them were located in the Salt Creek field. The drilling record for the state during the year was the completion of 339 wells, 261 of which were producing oil wells, fifteen were gassers, and there were sixty-three failures. In 1920 there were 348 wells drilled, 284 of which were oil wells, thirty-one gassers and sixty-three failures.

During the year 1922 the Salt Creek field produced 23,725,000 barrels of crude oil, but this only in a small degree represents the amount this field could produce with the release of oil now confined or shut-in at "producing" wells. From January 1 to December 31, 1922, the average daily output of Salt Creek was 65,000 barrels, covering periods of pipe line runs of thirty per cent, fifty per cent and forty per cent of production of uncapped wells. During several days of the last week in December, the Salt Creek pipe lines handled as high as 78,000 barrels but 65,000 barrels is reported on authority as the daily average covering the entire year under the three pro ratas. The best of authorities estimate that the Salt Creek field will produce a flow of oil for at least fifty years, or until 1972, with the same amount of drilling that has been in operation for 1921 and 1922, and that one-twentieth of the field has not yet been developed. There are about thirty square miles in this one vast dome, where practically every hole drilled means an oil well. There are two known producing oil sands and three other possible sands below these, and it is said that if this is not a billion dollar oil field, there is none in the United States.



Entering Salt Creek from the south, almost as through a gateway, the great oil field comes suddenly into view, a natural amphitheatre, the massive outcrops of the Shannon sandstone banked against the skyline like spectators of the activity far below. Seven miles to the north the bowl extends, and four miles east and west. Minor hills and valleys extend all over the field, but the general effect from the high entering road is one of flatness.

Derricks are sparsely spotted over the great area, some new and clean, others blackened old-timers, kept on the job for cleaning operations or deeper drilling. Most of the steady producers are not discernible from a distance, the rigs having been dismantled, and the wells quietly discharging into the feeder lines.

Over the many roads crawl fleets of motor trucks, carrying casing, timber, machinery and supplies, up hill and down dale, supplying the many camps dotted here and there.

About the center of the field is the village of Salt Creek. Here is the postoffice, Midwest offices, Midwest hotel, large and commodious, a splendid new brick school building, comfortable residences and all that goes to make up the comforts and conveniences of a small town such as a theater, church, newspaper, etc.

Near the south end of the field there is a new village known as the Ohio-Columbine camp, which consists of a long row of modern houses, which flank the main street, and in addition to these houses there are many other comfortable residences on the other streets which have been laid out. Following the main road northward, the next settlement of importance is the Midwest gasoline extraction plant. Here the streets are well laid out, with many comfortable residences.

Drilling activity at the north end of the field is not as marked as at the south end, probably seventy per cent of the new rigs being at the south end, but some day the north end of the field no doubt will have as many rigs as are now on the south end.

At this time (1923) there is an average of only about eight producing wells per square mile, or two wells per quarter section. The problem in the Salt Creek field is not in getting the crude oil, but how to get a market for it is the perplexing question.

In addition to the wonderful Salt Creek field, many new fields in Natrona county are being opened up, which goes to show that Casper will be an "oil town" for at least a century from this date, and is destined to be not only the largest and wealthiest city in the state, but one of the leading cities in the middle west of the United States.

During the latter part of 1916 and for nine months in 1917 Casper experienced a wonderful oil boom. Men in all walks of life neglected their business and their professions to buy and sell oil



stocks. It was a small day's business if half a million dollars' worth of oil stocks were not sold; for a number of months the several hundred oil brokers each made a profit of from \$100.00 to \$1,000.00 per day. Oil exchanges, where stocks were sold at auction, were established, and during the afternoons and evenings the rooms were filled with men and women who bought and sold stocks; in the evenings the rooms were not large enough to accommodate all the customers and many remained out on the side walk, but they bought and sold stocks just the same. In the lobby of the Midwest (now the Henning hotel) was where most of the trading was done. Many brokers had desks in the small rooms adjacent to the lobby, and an enormous rental was paid for these little rooms; there were a great many people who had no office nor desk, but they did their trading on the floor of the lobby. Most of these brokers always had on hand stocks worth from \$5,000 to \$25,000. Checks were given for stock amounting to several thousand dollars, and no doubt was ever entertained but there was money in the bank sufficient to cover the amount of the check; if some of the men who then wrote a check for \$5,000 which was accepted without question, were to write a check today for \$500 it would be taken with a considerable degree of suspicion as to whether it would be cashed at the bank. Orders were given among these brokers for the purchase of stocks at a given time and price, and if the stock was delivered before the time specified, it was accepted by the broker who gave the order, even though the price had gone down several points and the transaction involved a considerable loss. Square dealing and honesty was the rule among the brokers, and when one failed to act upon the square he was blacklisted and boycotted.

New oil companies were organized every day and the stock was placed on the market. Many of these companies had land that turned out very valuable, and the price of their stock today is from ten to twenty times as much as it sold for when the companies were first organized, but on the other hand many, many of the companies that were organized then and sold their stock at from fifty cents to one dollar per share today are unheard of, and many people have stored away certificates of a sufficient number to decorate four sides and the ceiling of a large-sized office room, all of which would not sell for enough money to pay for their postage carriage if they were to be delivered to the purchaser by mail service.

In the fall of 1917 many of the brokers had gone out of business; there was but little trading; men who had loaded up on stocks in the spring and summer were now selling out for any price they could get, while others took their loss like good philosophers and charged it up to bad judgment. But those were the real boom days in Casper.

## Tragedies of Natrona County

HANGING OF "CATTLE KATE" AND JIM AVERELL

**T**HOUSANDS upon thousands of cattle perished in the middle western states during the severe and long-continued storms of the winters of 1886, '87 and '88, and in the summers that followed the hills and hollows of the open range were literally covered with the bones of the beasts, which were bleached by the scorching rays of the summer's sun. The stockmen of Wyoming were the greatest losers of any of the cattle states, and many of the men who were comfortably well-to-do in the fall of '86 were financially wrecked in the spring of '88, and others were left only a shadow of their large herds which had been turned out after the fall roundups to rustle their feed and find shelter from the winter's storms.

But the rigorous winters and hot, dry summers were not the only menace that confronted the cattlemen and which bid fair to diminish their herds. The cattle thieves, or "rustlers," so called in those days, were now boldly making their presence felt more than ever before, by blotching the brands of the estray cattle they could find and putting their irons on the calves they could pick up. The thieves had steadily increased in numbers year after year until the cattle owners were in the minority, and the rustlers' influence, or rather, their means of intimidation, was much greater on the range than that of the "cattle kings."

The cattle owners, after seeing their large herds nearly wiped out by the elements, were forcibly impressed with the fact that the laws of our statutes did not protect them from the now strong band of rustlers, and they must organize and adopt and enforce a law of self-preservation, or go out of business entirely. The man who owned a great number of cattle and large tracts of land was looked upon by the rustlers as a prey, and the brand on his stock was blotched and the animals were driven off from their range with impunity, hence the organization of the cattle owners, who declared that "an injury to one is a concern to all," and it did not take them long to adopt their own methods of protecting their property and set up their own laws as punishment for the transgressor.

The rustlers had friends in nearly every settlement, and sometimes even among the cowboys working for the large outfits they

found sympathizers. On account of their reckless unlawfulness there were many people who protected them through fear, and it is said that in some cases men who served as jurors, and some of the judges on the bench failed to do their sworn duty, either through fear or actually favoring the thieves; and up to this day there are some people who contend that these men were justified in their depredations, because the big cattle outfits many times exceeded their rights in taking up large tracts of land and monopolized thousands of acres of the open range, thus starving and driving out the settlers and owners of small bunches of cattle. Courts had become a farce. There was no chance of securing a conviction upon a charge of cattle stealing in those days, and because of their security from the law some of the rustlers oftentimes committed crimes greater than stealing cattle, and little was said and nothing was done about it.

The first case, in what is now Natrona county, to require the cattle owners to apply the law of "self-preservation," occurred in the present peaceful and prosperous Sweetwater country. The day and date was Saturday, July 20, 1889, when James Averell, a man who conducted a saloon and small store in that part of the country, and Ella Watson, who ran a "hog ranch," and who adopted the name of Kate Maxwell, but who was dubbed by her friends "Cattle Kate," and was a consort of Averell, were hanged to the limb of a tree, in Spring canyon, near the Sweetwater river, about five miles west from the Averell ranch, and their bodies were left dangling side by side for more than thirty hours, until the authorities from Casper went out, let them down, held an inquest, and then buried them side by side on the ranch in close proximity to the saloon where they had carried on their nefarious business.

Averell's place of business was a "hang-out" for the rustlers, but many of the cowboys came there for a night's carousal, and before they left the place Averell generally had all their money and "Cattle Kate" had the promise of her brand on from one to half a dozen calves. Kate had taken up a homestead about a mile northwest from the Averell ranch, near "Steamboat" rock, where she built a cabin and had a pasture fenced in, and in a very few months had accumulated a very nice herd of cattle. When questioned as to how she acquired the stock, she simply said she "bought" them, and there was no law to disprove that she was not the rightful owner of them.

Both Averell and the Watson woman were avowed and open enemies of the large cattle and land owners, and on April 7, 1889, Averell wrote a letter for publication to the *Casper Weekly Mail* condemning the cattlemen who were operating in the Sweetwater country, and among other things he said:

"They are land-grabbers, who are only camped here as speculators in land under the desert land act. They are opposed to anything that would settle and improve the country or make it anything but a cow pasture for eastern speculators. It is wonderful how much land some of these land sharks own — in their minds — and how firmly they are organized to keep Wyoming from being settled up. They advance the idea that a poor man has nothing to say in the affairs of his country, in which they are wrong, as the future land owner in Wyoming will be the people to come, as most of these large tracts are so fraudulently entered now that it must ultimately change hands and give the public domain to the honest settler. Is it not enough to excite one's prejudice to see the Sweetwater river owned, or claimed, for a distance of seventy-five miles from its mouth, by three or four men? Change the irrigation laws so that every bona fide settler can have his share of the water; and as soon as possible cancel the desert land act, and then you will see orchards and farms in Wyoming. Who was it that in the year 1884 tried to have an act passed in the territorial legislature to bond each county in the territory to the amount of \$300,000 to run a railroad tunnel through the Seminoe mountains? It was one of the Sweetwater land grabbers."

Averell had homesteaded at the foot of the hills along the Sweetwater upon land that he mentioned in his communication as being claimed by these "three or four men," and the Watson woman put up her shack and fenced in a pasture not much more than a mile distant from Averell, and the two places were the incentive for many a hideous carousal and disregard for decency, where unlawful contracts were entered into for mavericks that were to be turned into the "Cattle Kate" pasture where her brand could be put on them. They were so open in their dealings that the cattle owners in the neighborhood decided that drastic measures must be adopted, and the man and woman must be dealt with severely, and the sentence of death was accordingly carried out with dispatch.

The first news of the hanging to reach Casper was on Sunday morning, July 21, at about eleven o'clock, nearly a whole day after the tragedy occurred, when E. J. Healy rode hurriedly into the village on horseback and told the authorities that Averell and the Watson woman had been taken by a mob and hanged side by side to a tree near Averell's ranch. The people of Casper were aware that trouble had been brewing in that neighborhood for a considerable length of time, and Phil Watson, the deputy sheriff, whose headquarters were in Casper, immediately started out with a posse of men to make an investigation. Upon arriving at the Averell ranch the deputy sheriff and his men ascertained that the facts were as represented by Healy, and the bodies had not yet been taken down.

The deputy sheriff and several men were guided from the Averell ranch by Frank Buchanan about five miles up the Sweetwater river, and turning to the south, following up the gulch leading into the rocks, in the darkness of the night, they found the bodies hanging close together, each at the end of a rope, which had been thrown over the limb of a scrub pine tree. The authorities cut the ropes and let down

the bodies and carried them to the Averell ranch where an inquest was held by Esquire Emery, Dr. Joe Benson, Tom Denson, Jess Lockwood, E. J. Healy, Jud Brazil and Frank Denson.

From the evidence given by Frank Buchanan, Ralph Cole, 'Gene Crowder, and John DeCory, the coroner's jury returned a verdict that "the deceased man and woman, James Averell and Ella Watson, came to their deaths by being hanged by the neck at the hands of A. J. Bothwell, Tom Sun, John Durbin, R. M. Galbraith, Bob Connor, E. McLain and an unknown man. The unknown man is said to have been George B. Henderson, who was shot and killed about a year later, an account of which is published elsewhere in this volume. The next morning two graves were dug a short distance east from the Averell building and the bodies were buried by the deputy sheriff and the other men who were there at the time, and although the graves were quite shallow, it is said there was at least twelve inches of water in them when the bodies were interred, the water having seeped through from the river, which was about on a level with the burial spot.

'Gene Crowder, a lad about fourteen years of age, who was at the Watson woman's cabin when the men drove up, gave his version of the taking away of the man and woman as follows: "I was at Ella's house trying to catch a pony when the men drove up. John Durbin took down the wire fence and drove the cattle out of the pasture, while McLain and Connor kept Ella from going to the house. After a while they told her to get into the wagon, and she asked them where they were going to take her. They told her to Rawlins. She said she wanted to go into the house to change her clothing, but the men would not permit her to do so, and they made her get into the wagon. Bothwell told her that he would rope and drag her if she did not get in. She got in and then we all started for Jim Averell's place. I tried to ride around the cattle and get ahead of them, but Bothwell took hold of my pony's bridle and made me stay with them. I then stayed with Durbin and helped him drive the cattle, while the others went ahead and met Jim, who was just inside his second gate, and who was just starting to go to Casper. They made him throw up his hands, and they told him they had a warrant for his arrest, and after they made him unhitch his team, they all came up where the cattle were and Jim asked Durbin where the warrant was. Durbin and Bothwell both threw their guns on Jim and told him that was warrant enough. They then made Jim get into the wagon and drove back a way and around on the north side of the rocks. John DeCory and I hurried down to Jim's house and told the folks there that they had taken Jim and Ella and were driving around the rocks with them. Frank



Buchanan got on a horse and followed them, and he was gone several hours. When he came back he told us they had hanged Jim and Ella."

Frank Buchanan testified before the coroner's jury to the effect that "when the boy told him Jim and Ella were being taken away by the mob, he got his six-shooter and a horse and went around to the west end of the rocks and saw them going toward the river. They drove into the ford and followed up the bed of the stream for about two miles, once stopping a long time in the water and arguing loudly, but he could not understand what they said. After they came out of the river, on the south side, they went toward the mountains and pulled up a gulch leading into the timber and among the rocks." He, the witness, then said he "rode around on the south side of the rocky hills, tied his horse and crawled over close to where they were. Bothwell had the rope around Jim's neck and had it tied to a limb. He told Jim to be game and jump off. McLain was trying to put a rope around Ella's neck, but she was dodging her head so that he did not succeed at the time. I opened fire on them, but do not know whether I hit anyone or not. They turned and began shooting at me. I unloaded my six-shooter twice, but finally had to run, for they were shooting at me with Winchesters. I ran to my horse and rode back to the ranch and told them that Jim and Ella had been hanged, and then I started for Casper. I got lost and pulled up at 'Tex's' ranch about 3 o'clock next morning. The hanging took place about twelve hours before."

"Tex" is E. J. Healy, who brought the news to Casper, and whose homestead shack was not far from where the government bridge now crosses the Platte river, about twenty-five miles southwest from Casper.

Buchanan further said: "Averell never owned any cattle and there were none in his pasture at the time of the trouble; the whole affair grew out of land troubles. Averell had contested the land that Connor was trying to hold and he had made Durbin some trouble on a final proof, and he had kept Bothwell from fencing in the whole of the Sweetwater valley. Ella Watson had a small bunch of cattle, nearly all of which were freshly branded, as she only recently got her brand recorded."

Bob Connor, who, it is said, never denied that he was with the party that did the hanging, told some of his friends that when they started out to get Averell and the Watson woman, they had no intention of hanging them, but they did intend to scare them and force them to leave the country. After forcing them to get into the wagon they took them to the Sweetwater river and told them that





SPRING CREEK CANYON. This is where Ella Watson and James Averell were taken to be hanged. "The way of the transgressor is hard," and the road to the place of execution was rough. + indicates tree where they were hanged. *Inset:* Ella Watson's cabin, near Steamboat rock, in the Sweetwater country.



THE TREE UPON WHICH ELLA WATSON AND JAMES AVERELL WERE HANGED BY CATLIFMEN, JULY 20, 1889.



they would drown them if they did not promise to go away. Instead of promising to leave the country the man and woman laughed at them, and told them there was not water enough in the stream to give them a decent bath. Some bitter words were passed by both sides, and then they came out of the stream and the victims were taken up into the gulch known as Spring canyon, among the timber and rocks, and ropes were thrown over the limb of a small tree and nooses were placed about the necks of the man and woman. They were once more told that if they would agree to leave the country they would be turned loose, but they again laughed at them and said that they did not dare to hang them, and then, it is said, Bothwell gave Averell a push and Henderson pushed the woman, and they both swung out between heaven and earth, and the two souls were sent into eternity. In contradiction of this, it was said at the time that Ella Watson, while struggling to keep the rope from being placed around her neck, begged the men in the name of God to spare her life, imploring them as they loved their mother and revered their sisters, not to send a helpless and erring woman thus unprepared before her Maker, but as no one was present except those who participated in the hanging and the victims, this statement cannot be verified.

Ella Watson was wearing a pair of Indian moccasins at the time the men forced her to get into the wagon, and after she was hanged the moccasins dropped from her feet, but they were not picked up by the men who cut the ropes and let the bodies down. Two days after the hanging Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Jameson went to the scene of the tragedy for the purpose of securing some photographs, and they found the moccasins under the tree, and Mrs. Jameson still has them in her possession. Mrs. Jameson took a photograph of the scrub pine tree which served as a scaffold upon which the victims met their doom, and the accompanying half-tones were made from the original photographs which were taken July 22, 1889.

Six of the men accused of the crime were in time arrested by Sheriff Frank Hadsell of Rawlins and given a preliminary hearing, and each of them was placed under bond of \$5,000, which was furnished and the men were allowed to go their way until they might be summoned to the district court or before a grand jury. George B. Henderson's name was not among those on the warrant.

A brother of Averell from Tacoma, Washington, came to Wyoming as soon as he heard of the tragedy. He was very quiet in his dealings, and succeeded in working up a very strong feeling against the men accused of committing the act, and for a number of weeks a subscription paper was circulated and a large fund was raised to carry on the prosecution. The county attorney was to be aided by

some of the best criminal lawyers obtainable, and the feeling became so intense that no one in the Sweetwater country ventured from his premises without being well armed.

Ella Watson's father came from his home near Lebanon, Kansas, and made his headquarters at Rock Springs, where he remained until after the case against the men was disposed of by the grand jury. Mr. Watson said that Ella was his oldest daughter, and she was twenty-eight years of age at the time of her death.

The grand jury of Carbon county convened in Rawlins on Monday, October 14, 1889, with John Milliken, Alfred Crove, H. A. Andrews, James Candlish, John C. Dyer, W. B. Hughes, John Mahoney, W. L. Evans, Charles Hardin, F. M. Baker, I. C. Miller, J. H. Mullison, C. W. Burdick, T. J. Dickinson, Harry Haines and George Mitchell as grand jurors. On Tuesday, the 15th, the case of the Territory of Wyoming vs. Albert J. Bothwell, Earnest McLain, Robert B. Connor, Tom Sun, Robert M. Galbraith and John Durbin came before the court, and in his charge to the men who were to decide whether or not a true bill should be returned against the accused, Judge Corn said:

"It is not ordinarily necessary to charge a grand jury with reference to special crimes, but it has come to my ears and is the subject of much conversation in this community and has been widely published in the newspapers that certain persons are charged with the hanging of a certain man and woman by lynch law in this county, and it is evident that there is great feeling and excitement in the community in regard to it. In such matters you are pre-eminently the guardians of the safety of the people and the good order of society. You have sworn to present none through malice or ill, and to leave none unrepresented through fear, favor or affection. It becomes you in connection with this matter to be especially regardful of this oath. Some of the ancients portrayed Justice as a goddess blindfolded. Her eyes were hood-winked, that she might not know even the persons upon whom she was called to pass judgment. In one hand she held the balances to weigh the evidence with impartiality, and in the other a sword with which to execute her decrees. This idea of 'Justice blind' should be your guide in this matter. Weigh the evidence with absolute impartiality and without regard to persons, and then strike, no matter where the blow may fall."

The accused were represented by Attorneys Corlett, Lacey and Riner and J. R. Dixon, and the state was represented by David H. Craig, the prosecuting attorney for Carbon county, and he was assisted by D. A. Preston. A challenge of the array of the grand jury was made by the attorneys for the accused, but the challenge was denied by the court, and after due deliberation by the grand jury it reported as follows:

"Territory of Wyoming vs. Albert J. Bothwell, Earnest McLain, Robert B. Connor, Tom Sun, Robert M. Galbraith and John Durbin. Not a true bill." The records then follow: "The grand jury at the present term of this court, having failed to find a true bill of indictment against the above-named defendants, or either of them, it is

ordered by the court that the above-named defendants and each of them, and their bonds be discharged. Samuel T. Corn, Judge."

It was claimed by the friends of Averell and Ella Watson that no bills were returned because of the lack of witnesses; that Buchanan, the material witness for the prosecution, who was under a five-hundred-dollar bond to appear, was "induced" to leave the country. He came to Casper in September and slept in a livery stable for two nights, then mysteriously disappeared and has never again been seen by anyone here. His bonds were forfeited and suit ordered against his bondsmen to recover the amount. John DeCory and Ralph Cole also mysteriously disappeared, and 'Gene Crowder, the fourteen-year-old boy, died of Bright's disease, before the case came to a hearing, and thus the case ended, until each individual should be taken and tried before that Higher Court, where no guilty man escapes.

The story is told that Ralph Cole left the Averell ranch the night after the hanging, and he was followed by George B. Henderson. Cole reached a surveyor's camp late at night and remained there until morning. The next day, while trying to make his way to a station on the Union Pacific railroad, he was overtaken by Henderson, who shot him, and the body of the victim was burned to ashes. Whether or not this is true can not be verified, but the fact remains that Cole has not since been seen, although every effort was made by friends to find him.

Regarding the disappearance of Cole, Dr. Mercer in his "Banditti of the Plains," written in 1894, says that "he was hunted like a wild beast, and the supposition is that he sleeps beneath the sod in some lonely mountain gorge, where naught but the yelp of the passing wolf disturbs the solemnity of his last resting place. Or, perchance, this same howling beast picked the bones and left them to bleach on the barren hillside."

On January 21, 1891, the lands filed upon by Ella Watson and James Averell were contested by Henry H. Wilson. The Averell homestead was filed upon February 24, 1886, in the Cheyenne land office, and was described as follows: West half of the northwest quarter, section 26, and north half northeast quarter, section 27, township 80, range 85 west. The Ella Watson homestead was filed upon March 24, 1888, the description of her land being the west half, southwest quarter, section 23, and south half, southeast quarter, section 22, township 30, range 85 west. The contestee stated that Averell and Watson "died in July, 1889, without legitimate issue of their bodies, being each a single person, and that the improvements on the said lands had been sold by the administrators of the estates of the said persons, and since their death the said premises have been



entirely abandoned." At the same time that the contest notices were being published, there appeared in the delinquent tax list at the county treasurer's office of Carbon county the information that the Averell estate, with G. W. Durant of Rawlins as administrator, owed the county \$12.44 for taxes, and that the Ella Watson estate was indebted to the county for taxes to the amount of \$2.49. Wilson in due time filed on the land above described and after proving up he sold the tracts to A. J. Bothwell.

The little shack owned by the woman, in which high carnival was held many a night by men crazy with drink, was moved by Bothwell from its original location, near Steamboat rock, to the bank of a small stream known as Horse creek, a couple of hundred yards east of the buildings on the Bothwell ranch, where it served the purpose of an ice house for thirty years after the tragedy, but in 1921 it was torn down.

The Averell buildings have long since been torn down and moved away. The two unmarked graves cannot be found, and even the trees among the crags where the tragedy was enacted have nearly all disappeared, and only the rugged rocks remain unchanged by time.

Today, a little more than thirty-three years from the time of the tragedy, four of the men who are said to have participated in this hanging, have been called hence, "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary shall find rest." Whether or not they were justified in their acts they have already answered before the spirits of the two poor creatures they sent before them, and judgment has long since been pronounced upon them by the Judge on High. At this time, 1923, three are still living: A. J. Bothwell retired from the stock-raising business in 1915 and moved to Los Angeles, California, where he has since made his home; R. B. Connor went back to his old eastern home at Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania, shortly after the tragedy, but returned to Central Wyoming several times on visits; R. M. Galbraith went to Little Rock, Arkansas, and engaged in the banking business, became wealthy and retired. He has visited this part of the country several times in recent years. Earnest McLain, who, with several of the others, claimed to be an unwilling member of the party, left the country a few years after the unfortunate affair and has not since been heard from and it is supposed that he is dead.

Time has to some extent healed the bitter feeling that existed between the friends of the men who set themselves up as judge, jury, and executioner, and the friends of the two unfortunates who were sent out of this world and before their Maker without being given time or opportunity to ask forgiveness for the wrongs they had committed or to repent of their sins.



## THE KILLING OF HENDERSON

George B. Henderson, who is said to have been one of the participants in the hanging of James Averell and Ella Watson in the Sweetwater country in July, 1889, and who was accused a few days later of shooting one of the principal witnesses and burning his body, was range manager for the 71 Cattle outfit, and from the day of the Sweetwater tragedy it seems that he was burdened with troubles of many kinds, which subsequently resulted in his being killed. His last quarrel was with a night herder named John Tregoning, who went by the name of Smith.

Instead of looking after the stock as he was supposed to, Tregoning usually built a camp fire and slept beside it, while the herd of cattle was allowed to roam at will. For his neglectfulness Tregoning was discharged by Henderson. Tregoning went to Buffalo, in Johnson county, after he was discharged by Henderson, and a few days later Henderson went to Buffalo after delivering some cattle to Johnson county parties. Tregoning met Henderson and asked him for some money, which he alleged was due him for work. Henderson gave him a check for nine dollars and told him that was all that was due him, and he must consider himself discharged from the 71 Cattle company. Tregoning contended that more money was due him, and that he would consider himself in the employ of the company until he arrived at the ranch and was paid in full. After Henderson left town Tregoning became boisterous, using some very abusive and vile language, and said that he would get even with Henderson in some other way. Tregoning then went to a hardware store where he bought a .45 Colt's six-shooter.

The next morning Tregoning left Buffalo, going to the Sheehan ranch, about two miles up the Sweetwater river from the 71 ranch. He turned the two 71 horses which he had borrowed, into Sheehan's pasture, and catching one of his own horses, he rode over to the 71 ranch. Henderson had just arrived home. Tregoning had his .45 Colt's in his holster, and Henderson ordered him to take it off, informing him that it was against the rules to carry a gun while on the ranch. Tregoning refused to take off his gun. Henderson then went into the ranch house and Tregoning went to the bunk house. Mrs. Henderson kept a close watch on Tregoning, and she called to her husband that Tregoning was going to shoot at him. Henderson immediately went out of the ranch house with a Winchester rifle and forced Tregoning to take off his six-shooter, after which the matter of wages that were due Tregoning was satisfactorily settled, and Tregoning was told to leave the ranch and return the two horses belonging

to the 71 outfit, which Craig, the foreman, had loaned him, and Tregoning agreed to return the horses.

Henderson then told Tregoning that he had been told of the threats made against him and said: "This is very serious, and if I hear of you making any further threats against me, the next time we meet, you must come a-shooting."

Tregoning then left the ranch, and three days had lapsed without the borrowed horses being returned, when Henderson, accompanied by Pete Stickles, a man employed on the 71 ranch, went over to the Sheehan ranch. Arriving at the ranch, Henderson dismounted from his horse at the horse corrals, and some cowboys told him that Tregoning was in the cabin. Henderson started for the cabin, leading his horse by the bridle reins, and Stickles rode behind him on his horse. Henderson had his six-shooter strapped upon him, but Stickles was unarmed. When Henderson was within about forty feet of the cabin door Tregoning came out with a Winchester rifle and advanced to the path and a man named Berry also came out of the cabin, and he was also armed with a Winchester. Tregoning ordered Henderson to stop and take off his gun, but Henderson continued to go forward, his head being bowed down to avoid the wind, which was blowing at a terrific gale. Tregoning again called out: "Stop! Mr. Henderson! Mr. Henderson, stop and take off your gun." Henderson then stopped, looked up from the ground, and pointing his finger at Tregoning, said: "Smith, put down that gun," and Stickles called out to the men, saying: "Two of you have guns; one of us is unarmed. If there is any trouble between you put down your guns and talk it over like men."

Tregoning looked back over his shoulder at Berry, and then leveling his rifle at Henderson, he pulled the trigger, and Henderson fell to the ground, exclaiming, "My God, I am shot," and he died almost immediately.

The jury who tried the case in Lander, the murder having been committed in Fremont county, deliberated for twenty-seven hours before returning a verdict, eleven of the jurymen favoring murder in the first degree for both Tregoning and Berry, but a compromise was reached on murder in the second degree for Tregoning and manslaughter for Berry.

Prosecuting Attorney Vidal of Fremont county was assisted by Attorneys A. C. Campbell and W. C. Stoll of Cheyenne, who were employed by the 71 outfit, and the defendants were represented by Attorney Look of Greeley, Colorado, D. A. Preston and E. H. Fort of Lander.

Tregoning was sentenced to life imprisonment in the state penitentiary and Berry received a sentence of twenty-five years.

Tregoning made his escape from the penitentiary after serving a little more than two years, and at that time it was intimated that the warden's daughter assisted in his escape. The prisoner is known to have come back to the same part of the state where he committed his crime, and the cattle rustlers protected him and assisted him in getting out of the country, and he has never been captured.

Governor John E. Osborne pardoned Berry after having served seven years, and the pardon met with no objection because he did not shoot at Henderson, made no threats and it is said would not have been convicted if he had had a separate trial from Tregoning.

Henderson had been shot at several times and had had numerous quarrels between the time of the hanging of Averell and Ella Watson and the day he met his tragic death. Two weeks after the hanging of the man and woman, an attempt was made on Henderson's life, which was described by the *Carbon County Journal* as follows: "About 9 o'clock Wednesday morning as George B. Henderson, manager of the 71 Cattle company, whose home ranch is near the Three Crossings on the Sweetwater, was leisurely driving along the road about a mile this side of Bell Springs, he was fired at by a concealed assassin, the bullet striking his off horse in the left hip, lodging near the hip joint. Upon being hit with the bullet the horse pitched and started to run. It took Mr. Henderson several minutes to get his team quieted, by which time nothing was in sight to show from whence the shot came. From the direction of where the shot came and the position of Mr. Henderson in the buggy, the bullet must have passed very close to his body."

George B. Henderson's correct name is said to have been John Powers. He came to Wyoming from the coal camps of Pennsylvania, where, it is said, he was mixed up in the killing of a man while acting as a "coal and iron police." He was the first of the seven men who were named in the unfortunate Averell-Watson affair to meet his death, and it being of so tragic a nature, many people deemed it a well-merited and salutary act of retributive justice, which was not long in its coming.

## A DANCE HALL MURDER

The first murder that was committed in Casper occurred on Saturday night, September 20, 1890, at about eleven o'clock, in the dance house conducted by the notorious Lou Polk, at which time and place John Conway shot and killed A. J. Tidwell, better known as "Red Jack," a cowboy in the employ of the FL Cattle company. A number of cowboys were in town that evening and, as was their

custom when in town, visited the dance house for a lark, "Red Jack" being among the crowd.

H. J. Summers, Jr., who was better known as "Sonny," a violinist, was chief musician at the hall that evening, and about the hour mentioned, when the boys had begun to feel the effects of their numerous drinks, Jimmie Hines, one of the cowboys, approached "Sonny," with whom he was acquainted, and saluted him familiarly. "Sonny" was not feeling well and failed to respond, whereupon Hines became indignant and attempted to quarrel with him. The matter was finally peacefully settled, but a little later Hines conceived the idea of renewing the quarrel, and solicited the assistance of "Red Jack." As soon as the quarrel was renewed, Conway, who was acting as barkeeper, interfered and he and "Red Jack" exchanged a few blows. But Conway suddenly broke away, and running back of the bar, got a six-shooter and began flourishing it. None of the cowboys were armed, having deposited their six-shooters with friends, to prevent the possibility of bloodshed, as was their habit before starting in on a spree. Conway continued to flourish his gun, and there was a general stampede. Nearly everyone ran out of the north door, including "Sonny," who ran against a limb of a pine tree standing in front of the door, and his left eye was gouged out.

"Red Jack" ran out of the east door, with Conway in close pursuit. When he saw Conway coming out of the door with the gun he exclaimed, "I am going! I am going!" But Conway rushed up to him, struck him on the head with his six-shooter and knocked him down, after which he deliberately shot him as he lay upon the ground. The ball from the six-shooter entered at the left side, above the hip, and passed through Tidwell's body, causing almost instant death.

One of the female inmates of the establishment ran over to Center street after Constable Hugh Patton, and when she found the officer she cried: "Oh, come, quick. They are fighting and shooting over at the dance hall." Mr. Patton immediately hurried over, and upon his entrance was greeted by Conway with the remark, "Well, I guess I am your prisoner. Here's my gun." The constable asked him what he had done, and he said: "I knocked a lame fellow down and shot at him. I expect I killed him."

The officer then ordered Conway to accompany him, but when they reached the door the prisoner demurred and demanded his gun, expressing a fear that the cowboys would do him violence. The officer assured him he would be protected, and finally compelled him to go. He was taken over to one of the saloons and left under guard

and Mr. Patton returned to the dance house to ascertain the extent of Jack's injuries and found him in the building, where his friends had carried him, a corpse. Conway was immediately lodged in jail and guarded until morning, when the inquest was held. The verdict of the jury was that Tidwell came to his death by a shot fired from a pistol in the hands of John Conway, without just cause or provocation.

Conway was immediately returned to the town jail, and a close guard was put over him. The cowboys were justly indignant over the unprovoked murder of one of their number, and to their friends freely talked of lynching the murderer. All day Sunday the cowboys were on the go, and by evening every "puncher" within a radius of many miles was in town. The officers scented trouble, and then resorted to a ruse to elude the would-be lynchers.

Accordingly, in the afternoon, the sheriff made a confidant of Conductor Hines and secured a key to a passenger coach, standing near the engine house on the railroad track. He then postponed the burial of Tidwell's remains until almost dusk, so that the cowboys, who intended to follow the corpse to the grave, would be detained until after dark. The body was buried in the cemetery about a mile east of town. (All the bodies buried there have since been removed to the Highland cemetery.) Rev. Macomber of the Congregational church conducted the burial service by moonlight, and the cowboys and citizens stood about the grave with bared heads, while no sound was to be heard but the minister's solemn voice and the champing of bits by the cowboys' ponies. The lid of the coffin was raised, and it was an affecting scene to see the band of cowboys, many of them in their rough clothes just as they had come off duty, and with belts and six-shooters on, take a last sad farewell of the remains of the comrade whom they had all known and esteemed so highly. Tears were in the eyes of many, and all were deeply affected, while no doubt some of them then and there vowed to be avenged.

But while this was going on and the cowboys were out of town, the officers were not idle. Sheriff Jaycox went to the funeral, well knowing that the boys would mistrust nothing if he accompanied them. However, the officers in town were posted as to the part they were to perform, and the cowboys were no sooner out of town and darkness settled down, than the prisoner was hurried from the jail to the passenger car, where he was guarded during the night.

The cowboys came in town after the funeral, but contrary to their custom they did not remove their six-shooters, wearing them throughout the night. A committee soon reported that the prisoner had flown, or at least was not in the jail, and after fruitless efforts to



ascertain his whereabouts the boys at about the dawn of day, left town.

The people who were not aware of the prisoner being removed from the jail, when they arose the following morning, expected that Conway had been lynched. However, when the hour set for the preliminary hearing had arrived the prisoner was produced. He waived examination, and was hustled from the court room to the train and taken to Douglas, where he was lodged in the Converse county jail.

Regarding the tragedy, the *Wyoming Derrick*, which was being published by W. S. Kimball at that time, said: "Ever since her escape last spring, wherein Lou Polk was forcibly abducted by 'Dogae' Lee, a reckless adventurer with whom she had been cohabiting and who had become jealous of her, and who cut off her nose upon being compelled to abandon her owing to the close pursuit of officers, she had imagined herself a heroine, or 'badman,' as it were. She assumed entire control of the dance house which she and Dogae had formerly owned in partnership, and set herself up as 'Queen of the Demimonde.' Her word was law in the establishment, and she delighted to show her authority. She breeds more discontent and trouble than any other dozen characters in the town, and when she finally obtained the services of John Conway, it is said she boasted that she had a man killer, and would like to see the person who dared to kick up a row in her house. On the afternoon of the killing she purchased the weapon with which the murder was committed, and it is probable that Conway had been encouraged to use it in case a row should occur.

"Human life must be protected, at any cost. Jack Tidwell was killed out of pure cussedness, by a man of whom it had been boasted that he was a man killer, and who evidently wanted to show his mistress, the dance house queen, that she had not overestimated him. If we must have a dance house, let it pass into the hands of some one who will at least keep an orderly place. There was never, perhaps, a more excuseless murder than that committed Saturday night, and Conway should stretch hemp."

An attempt was made to burn the dance house Wednesday night, September 24, at about 9 o'clock. During the absence of the inmates kerosene had been poured over the front door and floor, and a lighted match applied to it. One of the men connected with the house discovered the fire just as the oil had been burned off and the wood was beginning to blaze, and he extinguished it, but it was freely predicted and generally believed by the citizens that the house would be burned within a month.



Conway was held in the Converse county jail at Douglas for just one year, waiting trial in the district court to be held in Natrona county. On September 10, 1891, he was brought to Casper, where court was in session, with Judge Blake on the bench. F. H. Harvey of Douglas and Walter Stoll and A. C. Campbell of Cheyenne appeared as attorneys for the defendant, and Alex T. Butler, the prosecuting attorney for Natrona county at that time, and Judge Davidson were the prosecutors. The trial consumed three days, and after the state's evidence was adduced the attorneys for the defense held an all-night consultation, and the next morning at the convening of court Mr. Campbell made the announcement that his client desired to withdraw his plea of not guilty of wilful murder, but desired to enter a plea of murder in the second degree. The plea was accepted by the state, and the prisoner was sentenced to serve a term of twenty-five years in the penitentiary. He served four or five years and was pardoned by the governor. Conway went to Colorado after being released from the Wyoming penitentiary, and it was not long until he was in trouble again of a similar nature. At his trial he was convicted and was sentenced to serve a term of fifteen years in the penitentiary at Canyon City. His sentence was commuted to eight years, and after gaining his liberty he went to Denver where he adopted the profession of petty thief and hold-up, for which he was arrested, tried and convicted and sentenced to serve fourteen years in the penitentiary.

### HODGE KILLS WARREN

William Hodge, town marshal, in the performance of his duty, shot and killed William Warren, a cowboy in the employ of the CY, on Sunday morning May 10, 1891. Warren, with a number of other cowboys, rode into town from the CY ranch and patronized the saloons so liberally that it was not long until Warren became thoroughly drunk, and while in this condition he marched up and down the street declaring in a boisterous manner that he was a fighter, and that he was anxious to demonstrate his ability. Citizens objected to the language being used by the man, and they urged the town marshal to do his duty and preserve the peace. The marshal told Warren to go inside one of the saloons, and if he appeared on the street again in his drunken condition he would take him to jail. Warren went into a saloon but in a short time came out, mounted his horse and commenced to whip and spur the animal. The horse commenced to buck and came near going into the Windslow store. The marshal ran across the street, calling twice for Warren to stop, but he did not stop. The marshal then fired and Warren started his horse down the street.

The marshal fired again, and the cowboy reeled and fell dead from his horse.

Sentiment was about evenly divided as to whether the marshal was justified in the shooting, some of the citizens declaring that the officer should be upheld as a lesson to others who might want to march up and down the street swearing and cursing, and then endanger the lives of innocent people by making a horse buck on the main thoroughfare, while others declared that the action of the marshal was hasty, rash and not justifiable and that he exceeded his authority. Some of the cowboys and friends of Warren were inclined to avenge the death of their comrade, but they were advised not to make a bad matter worse, and they concluded to allow the law to take its course. Hodge was arrested and held to the district court for trial, and the case came up on Friday, September 4, 1891, immediately following the Conway trial. Alex T. Butler was attorney for the state and C. C. Wright was for the defendant. The trial was long and drawn out, requiring several days before it went to the jury, and then the jury deliberated forty-seven hours and was discharged without being able to reach a verdict, but it was said at one time the ballot stood eleven for conviction to one for acquittal. The case was continued until the next term of court and the defendant's bond was placed at \$3,000, and at the second trial the defendant was acquitted.

#### BOY SHOTS AND KILLS RANCH FOREMAN

On Monday, September 21, 1891, at the V—V ranch, Deitleff Kramhoft, aged 35, was shot by Virgil Turner, aged 14. The man and boy were in the cow corral doing the evening chores when the man threatened to whip the boy, and called him some vile names. Turner left the corral in haste and went to the bunk house where he waited with a .22 target gun for Kramhoft to come along. The boy demanded that Kramhoft retract the vile names he had called him. With an oath on his lips the man jumped forward and grabbed the muzzle of the gun, and during the struggle the boy pulled the trigger and the bullet entered the man's left side. The injured man was brought to Casper and placed under the care of a physician. The day following the shooting Kramhoft made an ante mortem statement, giving the facts as above stated and requested that the boy be not punished. The boy was arrested, however, and taken to Douglas, where he was placed in jail to await the result of the wounds inflicted by the shooting. On October 14 it appeared as though Kramhoft was going to recover, and the boy was brought up from Douglas and his trial was had before Justice G. E. Butler. G. B. McCalmont appeared

for the defendant and the prosecuting attorney asked permission to change the information from felony to assault and battery. Permission being granted to change the information, the boy pleaded guilty to the charge, and he was sentenced to three months in the county jail, and he was accordingly taken to Douglas where he served out the sentence of the court. Kramhoft lingered along until the first of November when he died early in the morning, and his remains were buried in the evening of the same day. Kramhoft conveyed all his property to the county for the payment of medical attendance and burial expenses. Nothing more was done with Turner, and he made his home in Casper until about 1900, during which time he was a good citizen.

### DUNBAR MURDER CASE

On Tuesday night, April 12, 1892, about nine o'clock Lewis Adams, a colored man, and several others were playing poker in Carter & Brenham's saloon. Wm. Dunbar was running the game and Jeff, his brother, was sitting near the table looking on. Adams, known as "Juaquin," after losing his money, tore up the cards and the dealer protested. Hot words followed and a fight seemed imminent, but they were parted by Jeff, and the dealer had taken his seat again when Adams commenced cursing and calling him vile names. Jeff then hit Adams, knocking him against the door, then pulled a gun and struck the negro over the head. "Pecos" Hughes here interfered, grabbing the gun, and Adams grabbed it about the same time. A scuffle then ensued. After scuffling a few minutes Adams let go of the gun and grabbed a billiard cue. Dunbar then said to "Pecos": "Turn me loose," which he did. Dunbar then told Adams to stop. "Don't you take another step," he said, pointing the gun at the colored man. Adams said: "Shoot away, it's fine music to my ears," and kept coming toward Dunbar with the billiard cue. Dunbar fired three shots in the wall and one in the floor but Adams kept on coming, and then Dunbar shot Adams and killed him.

After the shooting Dunbar coolly reloaded his revolver and walked out of the saloon the back way, going to the stable where he and his brother stood talking, when the sheriff and his deputy came up. Dunbar said: "Who are you?" Sheriff Rice replied: "It is me, and I want you." Dunbar answered: "All right, I intended to give myself up.

A preliminary trial was held and Dunbar was held to the district court for trial, without bail, and he was taken to Douglas and remained in jail to await trial. At the trial in the district court

Dunbar was acquitted, the jury finding that he shot the negro in self-defense.

The Dunbars left Casper after the trial, going to Dixon, Carbon county, then a new town on the Union Pacific railroad. In 1895 the brothers got into a fight with a man named Jim Davis. Jeff Dunbar shot Davis' right thumb off and knocked the gun out of his antagonist's hand. Davis picked up the gun with his left hand and shot Jeff and killed him. Wm. Dunbar then went from Dixon to Montana and that is the last that has been heard of him.

### HURT KILLS MILNE

At about 9 o'clock on Wednesday evening, April 3, 1895, Joel J. Hurt, state senator from Natrona county and then mayor of the town of Casper, shot and killed William Milne, a sheepowner who had been in business with Hurt. The shooting occurred on Center street, in front of the Senate saloon, and the evidence showed that Hurt was prepared for the tragedy and that the shooting of Milne was undoubtedly premeditated, for he walked up behind the man, touched him on the shoulder and said: "Turn your face around." Milne turned, and the men were separated nine feet apart when Hurt fired the first shot, striking Milne in the left arm; Hurt fired a second shot and the ball pierced Milne's heart. At about the same time Hurt fired the second shot Milne had drawn his gun from the inside of his coat, and he fired, but Hurt was not hit. Milne then ran into the Senate saloon and fell upon the floor with the exclamation: "My God, I'm shot," and immediately expired. The shooting was the outcome of a scandal in which Mrs. Hurt and Milne were the principals. Hurt had left his home six months previous to the shooting on a plea of ill-health, and returned only about ten days before the tragedy. During the absence of Hurt, Milne made his home at the mayor's residence and stabled his horses in Hurt's barn when he came to town from the range. Hurt sent the man word to keep away from his home, but no heed was paid to the warning, but threats were made to the effect that Hurt himself would be punished whenever the two men met.

After the shooting Hurt was taken to the county jail and on Saturday the preliminary trial was commenced before Justice of the Peace Wm. Ford. Chester B. Bradley and E. D. Norton appeared for the defense and George Walker and Alex T. Butler were attorneys for the state. The preliminary trial was concluded on Tuesday, and after all the evidence was adduced and the argument of the attorneys completed, the defendant was held to the district court for trial on

the charge of manslaughter, and the bond was fixed at five thousand dollars, which was furnished and the prisoner was given his liberty.

The trial was had in the district court held in Casper in May, 1895, and Judge Hayford gave instructions to the jury as follows:

"The court instructs the jury that if the jury believes from the evidence that at the time the said defendant is alleged to have shot the deceased, the circumstances surrounding the defendant were such as in sound reason would justify, or induce in his mind, an honest belief that he was in danger of receiving, from the deceased, some great bodily harm, and that the defendant, in doing what he did, was acting from the instinct of self-preservation, then he is not guilty.

"The court charges you that no wrong which the defendant may have suffered at the hands of William Milne constitutes any lawful pretext for his taking vengeance into his own hands, and slaying the man who has wronged him.

"The court charges you that no matter what wrongs the defendant may have suffered at the hands of William Milne he was thereby not justified in becoming his slayer; but if you believe from the evidence that as a result of these wrongs and of brooding over them this defendant was wrought up into a condition of frenzy and emotional insanity which rendered him irresponsible for his acts, the defendant is entitled to a verdict of acquittal at your hands."

The jury retired and in five minutes returned a verdict of not guilty, on the grounds of "emotional insanity, which rendered him irresponsible for his acts." Mr. Hurt's mind soon was "restored," however, and after several years he moved to South Omaha. The family soon divided and scattered to different parts of the country.

### ROBERT GORDON KILLED ON THE RANGE

On Sunday morning, May 30, 1897, at about 7:30 o'clock Robert Gordon, a man about twenty-seven years of age, was shot and killed at Kenneth McRae's sheep camp on Fales creek, about sixty miles southwest from Casper. The body was brought to Casper by McRae on the Wednesday following the tragedy, and he reported that the man came into the sheep wagon where he, McRae, was lying in bed, and only a minute or so after Gordon had come in he heard the report of a gun, which was lying on the foot of the bed, and he felt the force of the explosion. Gordon jumped out of the wagon and cried "I am shot! I am shot!" A sheep herder named Peter Keith was sleeping in a camp bed under the wagon when the shooting occurred, and he sent word to Casper that McRae's statement was not true



and that a thorough investigation of the tragedy should be made. A coroner's jury was appointed and McRae was placed under arrest. After an investigation, the coroner's jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased came to his death from a gunshot wound from a gun in the hands of Kenneth McRae. A preliminary trial was had and the evidence was sufficient to warrant the defendant being held to the district court for trial upon the charge of murder. The trial in the district court was had at the November term of court. E. D. Norton was the prosecuting attorney, and he was assisted by M. C. Brown of Laramie. Chester B. Bradley appeared for the defendant. The trial was commenced January 14, 1898, but the jury failed to bring in a verdict, the ballot standing eight for acquittal, and four for murder in the second degree. The defendant was then released upon a bond of thirty thousand dollars. A second trial was immediately called, and on Friday morning, February 22, 1898, a verdict was returned finding the defendant guilty of murder in the first degree. A motion for a new trial was made and Judge Bramel set March 11 as the date for the hearing of the argument. On March 11 a postponement was taken until April 5. On that date Attorneys Norton and Brown were ordered to present proof of the charges against the court of bribery and corruption which they had made or show cause why they should not be in contempt of court. The attorneys apologized and said they were mistaken, and the court accepted the apology but reprimanded them.

The hearing of the motion for a new trial occupied two days, and on the 7th of April a new trial was granted, and the matter of the bribery and corruption charges against the court, and the attorneys being in contempt of court were dismissed. The defendant was taken to Carbon county and there placed in charge of the sheriff of that county, but the sheriff of Carbon county at first refused to accept the prisoner on the ground that Natrona county was insolvent and Carbon would not be reimbursed for the prisoner's keep, but after being guaranteed that Natrona county was not bankrupt, and that all indebtedness would be liquidated, the officials of Carbon county accepted the charge. The trial was commenced in Rawlins on May 2, and on June 2, a verdict of not guilty was returned, and the defendant was discharged without prejudice. The three trials cost Natrona county more than six thousand dollars and much bitter feeling ensued for a dozen years after the trial. At the trial in Rawlins the attorneys for the state were E. D. Norton of Casper, C. E. Blydenberg of Rawlins and M. C. Brown of Laramie. The defendant's attorneys were C. B. Bradley of Casper, J. W. Lacey of Cheyenne and F. Chatterton of Rawlins.



## DEE BLAIR MURDERED

Dee Blair, a boy about ten years of age, was murdered on the Platte river bank about a mile west from Casper on or about the first of July, 1901, but the body was not found until July 17, and then it was in such a decayed and wasted condition that it could not be recognized except by the clothing and a gold ring which the boy wore on the middle finger of his right hand. A coroner's jury was impaneled and a verdict was returned to the effect that the lad had come to his death from causes unknown. The remains were interred in Highland cemetery, and the general public was of the opinion that the boy met his death by accident, but a brother of the lad who came to Casper from the Big Horn mountains, upon making an investigation of the premises, found a number of human teeth, some hair and several blood spots; there were numerous tracks in the low lands which showed that the boy had been chased by other boys, and there was evidence of a struggle in a clump of brush near the river bank, and from the brush it was evident that the boy made his escape to a small knoll and it was there that the lad was shot in the back with a shot gun, the tracks indicating that the person who did the shooting was about four feet from the boy. The murdered boy was wearing shoes, but the three boys who chased him and the one that evidently shot him were in their bare feet.

After this discovery had been made the body of the boy was exhumed and as the body was raised from the grave to the earth's surface, shot fell from the skeleton and the wad from a shot gun shell was found in the cavity of the boy's heart. The body was again interred and a further investigation was made of the premises where the tragedy occurred. An empty shot gun shell was found about seventy-five yards from where the body was found, and the murdered boy's hat was found about ninety yards distant. A man's tracks were found leading directly to where the body lay on the knoll, and this man had evidently moved the body about four feet from where it first fell, but why it had been moved could not be conjectured.

The governor of the state offered five hundred dollars reward for the apprehension of the murderers and the board of county commissioners of Natrona county offered a like amount.

Suspicion pointed to Charles, Roy and Archie Walker and Harry Guy as the guilty parties. These boys and the murdered boy had had trouble concerning some set lines in the river, and the man's tracks leading to the body of the murdered boy were thought to be the tracks of the Walker boys' father. The four boys were placed under arrest upon the charge of carrying a gun without a license.

An old single-barrel shot gun was found in the Walker residence, and loaded shells were found in which there was the same size shot as were found in the murdered boy's body, and the shells were of the same kind as the empty shell found on the ground where the murder was committed.

Every effort was made to get a confession from the boys who were placed under arrest, but they all maintained that they knew nothing about the tragedy, and they were discharged without a trial.

The Walker family and the Guy family soon left Casper and none of them has ever returned. The murdered boy's mother also left the town shortly afterwards, and Amos Blair, the brother of the murdered boy, went away with a vow that he would avenge his brother's death, but whether he has yet fulfilled his vow no one here has ever heard.

#### VIGILANCE COMMITTEE HANGS WOODARD

Vigilance committees and "lynch law" are terms of similar and familiar meaning in the American vocabulary. But this summary method of dealing with offenders who would otherwise go "unwhipped of justice," sometimes is excusable and a public necessity. Such was the condition in Natrona county when, goaded and outraged beyond endurance, well-disposed citizens determined to become a law unto themselves and to administer that law in the interest of justice and self-protection with promptness and decision. Numerous cold-blooded murders had been committed in Natrona county and not once had the assassin been required to pay adequate punishment and in a number of cases they were turned scot-free.

The first and only case where the extreme punishment was meted out by an organized body of men to a person with whom the law seemed too lenient occurred on Friday, March 28, 1902, forty minutes after midnight when twenty-four masked men went to the county jail, knocked on the door of the sheriff's office and told Sheriff Warren E. Tubbs they had a prisoner to be put in the jail and when the sheriff appeared at the door he was overpowered, bound and gagged and taken into one of the private rooms where two men stood guard over him. The keys to the jail were taken from him and Charles F. Woodard was taken from his cell and hanged to the gallows which had been built for his legal execution. Woodard had been given a trial in the district court, found guilty, and sentenced by Judge Charles W. Bramel to be hanged on the day the vigilance committee did its work, but the condemned man had been granted a stay of execution by the supreme court in order that it might

review the case to decide upon a new trial, application for which had been made by the condemned man's attorney.

Woodard made no outcry or resistance when the masked men appeared at the door of his cell, but when he was being taken out he asked to be allowed to put on his clothes. He was told that he would require no clothing, that he need not be afraid of freezing to death. A tight-fitting flannel shirt was all that covered his body and this was considerably shrunk from frequent laundering and left the nether man exposed to the biting blasts of the severe March weather. There were several inches of snow on the ground.

The gallows was constructed on the north side of the jail and a stockade had been built around it. The condemned man had to walk about twenty yards in the snow from the door of the jail to the gallows. A rope was placed around the man's neck as soon as he was taken from his cell, and, surrounded by the men, he was thus led up to the death trap. The other end of the rope was thrown over the cross-bar and it was then the trembling and frightened man cried out:

"Boys, let me kneel down and pray for you; I want to pray for all of you!

"These are the last words to my blessed little wife: Tell my dear little wife that I loved her dearly. Won't you tell her that, boys? I pray that you have the papers print this. O, God, forgive me for my sins. I pray for myself and I pray for Charley Ricker. I never had any grudge against him in God's world.

"Don't choke me, boys. For God's sake, you are choking me. Don't choke me to death. O, God, have mercy on me. God have mercy on my soul and I pray for my blessed little wife. Don't choke me to death, boys! You are choking me. Please don't choke me. I did not shoot Charley Ricker on purpose. Lord, have mercy on me and my dear little wife."

With the rope tightly drawn about his neck he was then lifted on the trap, but he gave a spring off from it before the lever could be pulled and in making the jump, he slipped and fell. He was then picked up by several of the men and thrown over the railing on the north side of the gallows. When the rope was drawn to full tension, there were a few fearful struggles and nervous twitches of the body dangling in the air, and two of the men caught hold of his feet and gave them several hard jerks. They then drew the body toward the north and letting loose the dangling and almost lifeless form of the wretched man, it swung back and struck the framework of the gallows.

They then all stood back and watched the writhing form. A gurgling sound came forth, which was the most sickening noise human

being ever heard. He was choking to death. Everybody was silent for a moment and the gurgling sound kept getting fainter and fainter, until life was extinct. A card was pinned on the man's shirt which read as follows:

“Process of law is a little slow,  
So this is the road you'll have to go.  
Murderers and thieves, Beware!

PEOPLE'S VERDICT.”

The men then filed out of the stockade and scattered in all directions. It was just one hour from the time Woodard was taken from his cell until his lifeless body was cut down from the gallows and taken to the town hall. E. H. French, Steve Tobin and John Grieve were impaneled as a coroner's jury and they returned a verdict to the effect that Charles Francis Woodard met his death from strangulation by being hanged by the neck with a rope by a vigilance committee, the names of the men being unknown to them.

Governor Fenimore Chatterton the next day wired Prosecuting Attorney Alex T. Butler to make every effort to ascertain the names of the men of the vigilance committee and vigorously prosecute them for “debauching the state's fair name.” The prosecuting attorney could no doubt have easily discovered who most of the members of the vigilance committee were, but he, like most of the citizens, considered that the vigilance committee had done a good job and the matter of an investigation was overlooked entirely.

Woodard was arrested during the month of November, 1901, on a charge of grand larceny. He was bound over to the district court for trial, and being unable to procure bondsmen, was incarcerated in the county jail. On the night of December 30, he, with several other prisoners, escaped from the jail by sawing off one of the bars in the corridor window and crawling through.

Sheriff W. C. Ricker and a number of deputies went to the Woodard ranch, near Garfield Peak, about seventy-five miles west from Casper, in search of the escaped prisoners, reaching there on the evening of January 2. The sheriff and his men put their horses in the stable and went to the house. Woodard arrived at the ranch shortly afterwards, and seeing the horses in the barn, he knew the officers were waiting for him. He went into the barn intending to take a horse belonging to one of the officers and ride away. Sheriff Ricker told his men he thought he heard a noise in the barn and that he would go down and investigate. When the sheriff was within ten feet of the barn door, Woodard fired at the officer, shooting him through the body, and while the sheriff was lying on the ground in a dying

condition, Woodard emerged from the barn and struck him in the face with his six-shooter, thus knocking the last spark of life out of the already dying man. He then robbed the dead officer of forty-five dollars in money and took his six-shooter and a belt filled with cartridges. The deputies at the house by this time commenced shooting toward the barn and Woodard fired at them, preventing them from coming to the rescue of their fallen comrade.

During the night, Woodard made his escape from the barn on one of the officers' horses. He traveled over the country for about ten days, sleeping in some abandoned cabin when he slept at all and his sustenance consisted of rabbits that he killed and half-cooked. A posse of more than one hundred men was organized to apprehend him, but he managed to elude them. A reward of \$1,000 was offered by the county for his capture and cards giving a description of the criminal and announcing the reward were sent broadcast.

He reached Arvada, a small station on the Burlington railroad in northern Wyoming, after about ten days and there abandoned his horse, and mounting a freight train went to Billings; from Billings he went to Laurel, Montana, where he met a man named Owens and went to the Owens ranch to work, giving his name as Bill Gad. Owens had read about Woodard's crime and recognized him, but promised to protect him. However, after writing to the authorities in Casper and being assured that he would receive the reward if he captured Woodard, he and a man named Berkheimer set about to turn him over to the authorities. One day as the three men were eating their dinner, Berkheimer got up from the table, pretending that he was sick. He went behind Woodard's chair, and at the same time Owens arose and pointing a gun at Woodard ordered him to surrender. Woodard started to get up and he was struck on the head with a gun by Berkheimer and a terrible fight ensued. Woodard's head was cut open in three places, both eyes were blackened, and his face was bruised and cut in such a horrible manner that he could hardly be recognized by the people who knew him. He was taken to Billings and there placed in jail. The authorities of Natrona county were notified of the capture and Sheriff Tubbs and Deputy Sheriff James B. Grieve went to Billings and brought him to Casper. They arrived here at 11 o'clock on the night of January 29. There were over 300 people at the depot, most of whom were bent on taking the prisoner from the sheriff and lynching him. About thirty men formed a V at the steps of the passenger coach when the officers and the criminal emerged and they surrounded the three men and escorted them to the county jail, but the large crowd followed the party to the jail determined to lynch the murderer if they could get hold of him.



District court was in session at the time, and Woodard was given a speedy trial. Judge Bramel appointed C. de Bennet and John M. Hench to defend the prisoner and Alex T. Butler prosecuted the case. The trial was held in the town hall which was then located on Center street directly opposite from where the Consolidated Royalty Oil company building now stands. The little room was filled to overflowing every day of the trial. After all the evidence was adduced and the attorneys made their arguments, the court gave his instructions. It did not take the jury long to return a verdict of "Guilty of murder in the first degree," and in pronouncing sentence upon the condemned man, Judge Bramel said:

"To pronounce the dreadful sentence which is to cut a fellow mortal off from society, to deprive him of existence, and to send him to the bar of his creator, and his God, where his destiny must be fixed for eternity, is at all times, and under any circumstances, most painful to the court. But to be compelled to consign to the gallows a man in the full prime of manhood presses upon my feelings with a weight which I can neither resist nor express.

"If, in the discharge of this most painful duty which can ever devolve on any court, I should in portraying the horrid circumstances of this case, make use of strong language to express the enormity of your guilt, and the deep depravity which it indicates, I wish you to rest assured it is not with any intention of wounding the feelings of your relatives, nor for the purpose of adding one pang to your own afflictions which the righteous hand of an offended God is pressing so heavily upon you. But it will be for the purpose, if possible, of awakening you to a proper sense of your awful situation, and to prepare you to meet the certain and ignominious death which shortly awaits you. It is to endeavor, if possible, to soften your heart, and to produce a reformation in your feelings; that, by contrition and repentance you may be able to shun a punishment infinitely more dreadful than any that can be inflicted by human laws—the eternal and irremediable ruin of your guilty soul.

"From the testimony which was given at the trial, there is no room to doubt the certainty of your guilt, and the aggravated circumstances of the bloody deed. The man you murdered was an officer of the law, and treated you kindly while you were in his custody. In following you up after your escape from jail, he was simply performing a duty imposed on him by law. On the evening when you perpetrated this crime, he was unconscious of the hatred for him which found lodgment in your heart, and walked towards the stable where you were lying in wait for him, he believed that his treatment of yourself as well as the other prisoners who escaped with you, insured him protection at your hands. Instead of this you waited his approach, concealed by the darkness of night, you prepared for the crime, and as he approached the stable door you deliberately shot him down. Following this, and while he was in the throes of his death agony, you struck him with your six-shooter to finish him, as you yourself have expressed it, and then you robbed his remains like a ghoul. While in your own statement upon the stand you have denied doing some of these things, the conclusion that you did do them is inseparable from the evidence.

"The punishment of death has been pronounced against the crime of murder, not only by the laws of civilized nations, but also by the law which was written by the pen of inspiration under the dictation of the unerring wisdom of the Most High. And as God himself has prescribed the righteous penalty for this offense, so there is strong reason to believe that very few murders are committed which are not ultimately discovered, and the wicked perpetrators thereof brought to justice.

"Wretched and deluded man; in vain you have attempted to escape the consequence of your act; in vain have you ridden through the winter storms to elude the vigilance of your pursuers; in vain have you attempted to impress upon the hearts of twelve good and true men who sat upon your trial, that you should have clemency.



"One can almost see the hand of God, in the weaving together of the remarkable chain of evidence, that makes your escape from the punishment that waits you impossible. The sword of human justice trembles over you, and is about to fall upon your guilty head. You are about to take your final leave of this world and enter upon the untold retributions of a never-ending eternity. And I beg of you, do not delude yourself with the vain hope of pardon or executive clemency, which can never be realized. Your destiny for this world is fixed and your fate is inevitable. Let me, therefore, entreat you, by every motive, temporal and eternal, to reflect upon your present situation, and the certain death that surely awaits you.

"There is but one who can pardon your offenses; your creator. Let me, therefore, entreat you to fly to him for that mercy and that pardon which you must not expect from mortals.

"When you have returned to the solitude of your prison, where you will be permitted to remain for a few short weeks, let me entreat you by all that is still dear to you, in time, by all that is dreadful in the retributions of eternity, that you seriously reflect upon your present situation and upon the conduct of your past life. Bring to your mind the horror of that dreadful night, when the soul of the murdered sheriff was sent unprepared into the presence of his God, where you must shortly meet it as an accusing spirit against you.

"Bring to your recollection the mortal struggles and dying groans of the man who had been kind to you and yours. Think of the situation of your wife, and your aged mother who nursed you in the lap of affection and watched over the tender years of your infancy. Then think of the widow and orphan children of the murdered sheriff, left alone as they are to battle the storm of life, by your hand, and when by such reflections as these your heart shall have become softened, let me again entreat you, before your bloodstained hands are raised in unavailing supplication before the judgment seat of Christ, that you fly for mercy to the arms of the Savior and endeavor to seize upon the salvation of the cross.

"Listen, now, to the dreadful sentence of the law, and then farewell, forever, until the court and you, with all this assembled audience shall meet together in the land from whence no man returneth.

*"You, Charles Francis Woodard, are to be taken from hence to the county jail of this county, and therein confined, under proper guard as provided by law, until the 28th day of March, 1902, at which time, between the hours of 9 a. m. and 3 p. m. you are to be taken to an enclosure, specially prepared within the jail yard of said county, and that at said time and place you be hanged by your neck, until you are dead.*

*"And may that God whose laws you have broken, and before whose tribunal you must then appear, have mercy on your soul."*

## MURPHY MURDER CASE

At the head of Deep creek in the Big Horn mountains, on June 14, 1902, at about 9:30 at night, at the sheep camp of E. S. Murphy, Fred Kassahn, twenty-three years of age, was shot and killed and Van Ferris, eighteen years old, was shot in the right arm by a posse of men composed of E. S. Murphy, Elmer Roe, W. F. Edgerton, J. B. Okie, William Griffin, Harry Martin, T. J. Hicks, and Fred Urine. Kassahn's head was shot off and it was necessary to amputate Ferris' arm at the shoulder. The two men had been working in Murphy's sheep camp and a quarrel resulted when the men were paid off. Kassahn and Ferris had caused considerable trouble and had made numerous threats against Murphy and his men. On the day they left Murphy's employ they beat the camp mover with a quirt,

tried to run Murphy down with a horse and threatened to kill him and burn his property. They then went to Murphy's sheep wagon on Deep creek and took possession.

The posse organized in the evening and went over to the wagon where the two men had taken possession. The posse surrounded the wagon and called to the men to come out. The men arose from their bed and Ferris ran out, but before he got out of the wagon he was shot in the arm. Kassahn secured a gun before he attempted to get out and his head was shot off while he was yet in the wagon.

Criminal complaints were issued against Murphy and Martin, charging them with the murder of Kassahn and at the preliminary trial, held June 21, Murphy was held to the district court for trial and his bond was fixed at \$10,000. Martin was also held and his bond placed at \$2,000. At the preliminary trial, Murphy and Martin took the full responsibility of the shooting, but when the trial came up in the district court, which was held the latter part of November, the names of all the men who participated in the affair were brought to light. The first trial resulted in a disagreement of the jury. Court was then adjourned and the case came to trial again in July, 1903, and again the jury could not reach a verdict, the vote showing eleven for conviction against one for acquittal, while in the previous trial, the jury stood nine for acquittal and three for conviction. These two trials had cost the county in the neighborhood of \$12,000 and there were but about 250 men left in the county qualified to act as jurors in the case. At this time, Murphy made an affidavit to the effect that he was bankrupt and destitute; that he had no money, no property, and no credit, and that he could not secure counsel to defend him at another trial and he asked that the court appoint an attorney for his defense and that the county provide the fee for said attorney.

The court adjourned and the case was set for January 11, 1904, but at the meeting of the board of county commissioners held October 6, 1903, the following resolution was adopted: "Be it resolved that the board of county commissioners request the county attorney to dismiss the case of the State versus Edwin S. Murphy." The resolution was adopted by the following vote: E. L. McGaugh, aye; P. C. Nicolaysen, nay; T. S. Steed, aye. This ended the case. Murphy disposed of what interests he had left in the county and returned to his former home in the east where he has been content to remain ever since.

The first two trials were held before Judge C. W. Bramel. Alex T. Butler was prosecuting attorney, E. D. Norton, F. D. Hammond, of Casper, and T. F. Burke, of Cheyenne, were the attorneys for the

defense. At the last trial, C. E. Carpenter was the trial judge and J. M. Hench was the prosecuting attorney, while the same attorneys acted for the defense. In accordance with the resolution adopted by the board of county commissioners, a *nolle prosequi* was entered at the January, 1904, term of court. The case against Martin was also dismissed and no charge was ever preferred against any of the other men who participated in the shooting.

### DEATH OF JAMES CAREY

James M. Carey was found dead in his ranch house in the Muddy country seventeen miles east from Casper on the evening of October 19, 1903. In the barn were two dead horses which had starved to death. The body was discovered by Hugh Atkinson, Oscar Creel and Myron Spencer. It was badly decomposed, and it was evident that death had resulted two weeks before. It was evident that the man had died from natural causes and a verdict was so rendered by a coroner's jury. A grave was dug a short distance from the house and the body was interred where it remained several months, when relatives caused it to be disinterred and brought to Casper.

Some people seemed to be of the opinion that the man had been murdered, and to satisfy them before the body was interred in Highland cemetery Drs. A. F. Hoff and T. A. Dean made a post mortem examination, taking out the heart and stomach and sawing the skull open. They also made a thorough examination of the body. They were unable to find any indications of violence, bullet holes, bruises, fractures, or poison, and they decided that he came to his death from natural causes.

James Carey was a bachelor, possessing considerable ranch property in the Big Muddy country. He made frequent trips to Casper and after making small purchases at the stores, he generally visited the saloons where he drank whiskey until he was in such a condition that he was helpless. He had visited Casper shortly before his death and it is supposed that he died from exposure and alcoholism.

### JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDE

Ed. Baker, a colored man, forty-one years of age, was shot and killed at 2:45 in the morning, December 18, 1912, by Mrs. Clarence Hill, also colored. Baker, with half a dozen other colored people, spent the night at the Hill residence on south David street in Casper, and all consumed a considerable quantity of intoxicating liquor. They were having a hilarious time, and there was more or less quar-

reling. The guests were finally ordered to leave the house and when they were out in the yard Baker made some remarks and a threat which aroused the anger of the hostess and without further ado she shot him in the stomach and he died within a few hours. Mrs. Hill was held to the district court for trial upon the charge of murder, and at the January, 1913, term the jury returned a verdict of not guilty, deeming it justifiable homicide.

### GEORGE EDWARDS KILLS TWO MEN

Roy Landers, alias Roy Grant, alias Grant Smith, was shot and killed on the streets of Casper by George Edwards on January 26, 1913. Landers had worked on the Edwards ranch in Bates Park and induced Mrs. Edwards to go with him to Nebraska, leaving her husband and four little children. Landers was brought back to Casper and pleaded guilty to the charge of inducing Mrs. Edwards to leave the state with him, and was sentenced to serve fifteen months in the penitentiary. Sheriff J. A. Sheffner was escorting Landers and another prisoner, named J. E. Wolford, from the court house to the Northwestern railway passenger station, with the intention of taking them to the penitentiary. The two prisoners were handcuffed together and were walking several feet ahead of the sheriff and his deputy. Edwards stood in the recess of the side door of the Webel store on Center street and when the men came along the sidewalk opposite to where he was standing, he shot Landers through the chest near the heart. The sheriff took the gun away from Edwards and hastened to his prisoners, who had gone a distance of about thirty feet into the street before the wounded man fell. The sheriff unlocked the handcuffs and took charge of Wolford, turned Edwards over to the deputy and started the wounded man for the hospital in an ambulance, but he died within an hour after being shot. A coroner's jury was impaneled to make an investigation of the shooting, and a verdict was returned to the effect that "Roy Landers came to his death as a result of a gun-shot wound, inflicted by a party or parties unknown." The sympathy of the community was with Edwards, and although many witnesses testified that they saw Edwards fire the shot and saw Landers fall immediately afterwards, the members of the coroner's jury contended that they could not tell whether it was the bullet from Edwards' gun or from some one's else that killed the man. Notwithstanding the result of the coroner's jury and the sentiment of the people in favor of Edwards, he was held to the district court for trial without bail upon the charge of murder in the first degree. The trial was had within a few days after the tragedy and he

was acquitted. Edwards returned to his ranch with his wife and children, but the killing of a man on account of her unfaithfulness did not seem to cause a very deep or lasting impression upon Mrs. Edwards, and on June 17, 1913, Edwards shot and killed Fred Ott, the cause of this shooting being unfaithfulness of Mrs. Edwards, the same as the one which had occurred less than five months previous. The tragedy occurred at the Edwards ranch in Bates Park. Three shots were fired by Edwards while the two men and the woman were in the house, two of the bullets entering Ott's back, the third missed. Ott ran out of the house and made his way to the bunk house. The woman rode to the nearest neighbors and telephoned to Casper for a doctor and for the sheriff. After Mrs. Edwards had gone to the neighbors, Edwards followed Ott to the bunk house and while the prostrate man was pleading for his life Edwards deliberately shot him in the back again, which ended his life. Edwards was brought to Casper and lodged in the county jail, with a charge against him of murder in the first degree. A change of venue was taken, and his trial was had in Douglas, Converse county, in January, 1914, about a year after his trial in Casper for the killing of Landers. A verdict of manslaughter was returned by the jury and he was sentenced to serve twenty years in the penitentiary. After he was sentenced Mrs. Edwards took from her finger her wedding ring and handed it to the condemned man with the remark that she was through with him. After serving several years in the penitentiary Edwards received a pardon, and made a new start in life by taking a ranch and establishing a home for his children in the southwestern part of the state.

### CUT HIS WIFE'S THROAT WITH A RAZOR

While in their room at their boarding house in Salt Creek on Friday afternoon, January 8, 1915, Wilmer P. Palmer murdered his wife by cutting her throat with a razor. He then slashed his own throat with the razor but the wound was slight. He was brought to Casper and placed in the hospital and was fully recovered in a week. At a preliminary trial held upon his removal from the hospital he was held to the district court for trial without bond upon the charge of murder in the first degree. On April 19, 1915, he was found guilty as charged and the next morning at about 2:30 he again attempted to commit suicide by cutting the arteries of his left wrist with a safety razor blade. Some of the other prisoners at once notified the sheriff and a physician was called and prevented him from bleeding to death. Within a week after he was found guilty the court sentenced him to be hanged on Friday, August 6, 1915,



and he was taken to the penitentiary at Rawlins where the sentence of the court was obeyed on the above date by the warden of the state penitentiary.

### THE BESS FISHER TRAGEDY

Bess Fisher, a woman of the underworld, on October 26, 1917, shot and killed Lawrence Barrett in the Rhinoceros restaurant at Casper. The woman alleged that Barrett had squandered considerable of her money while they lived at Anchorage, Alaska, and when her money was gone he would have nothing more to do with her and soon left Alaska. She followed him to Casper, hoping to win back his affections or have her money returned. After arriving in Casper she had several unsatisfactory conferences with him and on the above date, while she was sitting at a table in the restaurant, Barrett and his wife came in. As Barrett was about to sit down at a table the Fisher woman arose from her chair with such haste and excitement that she turned the table over and spilled the dishes on the floor, but before Barrett had taken his seat she drew a gun from her pocket and fired. The bullet entered Barrett's right arm, passed through his heart and through his body and came out under his left arm above the elbow. After Barrett had fallen to the floor the Fisher woman held the smoking gun in her hand, and with a sneer on her face looked at Mrs. Barrett as if to say that if she could not have him no other woman could. She then went to the counter and gave up her gun. She was taken to jail and her trial was had at the March term of court in 1918. Before the jury she pretended to be sick, almost fainting several times, and when she talked she would speak scarcely above a whisper. She acted the part so well that some of the jurors no doubt were to a considerable extent influenced in favor of returning a verdict that they would not have returned for Barrett had the situations been reversed. She testified in her own behalf, claiming that she shot the man in self-defense; that when Barrett entered the restaurant he said to her: "I'll get you yet." She then stepped back from her chair and fired. This was her strongest argument for shooting and killing the man she pretended to love; the man who had squandered her money and deserted her; the man who was married to another woman, but it was enough to satisfy eleven jurors, and after deliberating sixty-three hours, a verdict was not reached, one juror holding out for conviction, against eleven who favored acquittal. The jury was discharged. Court adjourned without a re-trial, and in June the woman was released from the county jail under bonds of \$5,000, and at the September term of the district court the case was



dismissed, and once more the statue of "Justice," standing above the court house doors, was a misnomer.

### GAMBLERS COMMIT MURDER

Lawrence Nina Friccero was shot and killed at about 2 o'clock in the morning of December 21, 1918, by Zura Eagleston. Eagleston was aided and abetted by Sam Larsen. The shooting occurred in a room over the Iris theater, which was used as a gambling joint. The killing of Friccero was in cold blood, while he had his hands in the air begging for his life. Eagleston, Larsen and Friccero were engaged in a game of poker when an argument arose, and Larsen pulled a knife on Friccero and Eagleston pulled a gun. Friccero backed in a corner with his hands in the air and declared that he did not want to fight; that he was unarmed and that if the men would let him go away there would be no more argument or quarreling. The two men searched Friccero and then Eagleston deliberately shot him through the stomach. The wounded man was taken to the hospital and died in about twelve hours. Eagleston and Larsen were arrested, but Larsen was discharged. At the term of the district court in March, Eagleston was convicted of murder in the second degree and was sentenced to serve from twenty-one to twenty-five years in the penitentiary.

### BOOTLEGGERS MURDER AN OFFICER

Charles Moore, H. J. Evans, H. B. Armstrong, Roy E. Martin and Lawson Hallowell, the three former being taxi-drivers and the two latter engaged in the plumbing business, but whose principal occupation was bootlegging, were the principals in an atrocious murder Sunday morning, November 2, 1919, when Deputy Sheriff Tom Majors was shot in the arm and the head with a shot gun and instantly killed and County Jailer George McKenzie was shot in the right shoulder. Martin was shot in the right breast three times and the thumb of his right hand was shot off by one of the deputy sheriffs. McKenzie and Martin were taken to the hospital and in due time both recovered from their wounds.

Armstrong and Moore had previously been arrested upon the charge of stealing \$40,000 worth of whiskey, but the case against them was dismissed on account of the lack of evidence. It was learned that about two hundred cases of liquor had been stored on the Martin property, and at 4 o'clock in the morning Sheriff Pat Royce, Deputy Sheriffs Tom Majors, W. E. Kilgore, Charles Easton and George McKenzie and Special Detective Roberts of the Burlington railway

went to the Martin plumbing shop to make a raid on the bootleggers. When the officers surrounded the building, Armstrong and Martin came around a corner armed with shot guns. Majors saw them approaching and called to them to put up their hands. "Go to hell! Put up your own," was the answer and command of Armstrong, and without further parley he fired at the officer. The first shot shattered the deputy sheriff's right hand and the second shot struck him full in the mouth, the charge passing through and blew out the back of his head. Martin opened fire at about the same time and wounded McKenzie, but before he could fire a second time Roberts opened fire on him, with the result of four bullets taking effect, three in his chest and one shattering his thumb. Armstrong and Martin then ran to Martin's house which was near by. When the smoke of the tragedy had cleared away search was made of the premises and great quantities of liquor were found buried under the floor of the plumbers' shop, the cases being covered with several inches of earth.

Armstrong and Moore were placed in jail and Martin was guarded by a deputy sheriff in the hospital. Evans and Hallowell were dismissed. The board of county commissioners appointed C. E. Winter and M. W. Purcell as special prosecutors for the county to prosecute the case against the assassins. This action of the county commissioners caused Prosecuting Attorney W. E. Patten to feel slighted, and he caused the arrest of Sheriff Royce and Deputy Kilgore at 2:30 in the morning of November 6, charging them with feloniously attacking Armstrong on the morning of November 2, with the purpose of committing violent injury upon him. The sheriff and his deputy were dispossessed of the office and Constable John McClellan, who served the warrants on the officers, took charge. The trial of the sheriff and his deputy were had before Judge W. E. Tubbs without delay and the cases against them were dismissed, and the sentiment of the community was so strong against the prosecuting attorney that he was forced to resign, and the feeling against the men who were charged with the murder of the deputy sheriff was such that a number of citizens organized and no doubt would have dealt out justice without waiting for trial by the courts had they not been assured by the special prosecuting attorneys, the county commissioners and other county officers that a speedy trial would be had and that justice would be meted out without unnecessary delay. Circulars were distributed about the city and notices were published in the newspapers by the county commissioners as follows:

"In face of the terrible tragedy, in the interest of the welfare of our city and county, we appeal to all good citizens to remain calm and assist the officers in maintain-

ing law and order. They have our assurance that those responsible for the tragedy will be brought speedily to trial."

An editorial appeared in the *Daily Tribune* as follows:

"Because he enforced the law against bootleggers and murderers the sheriff of this county is ordered thrown in jail by a county attorney, and an unexperienced constable ordered placed in entire charge of the court house. Not only are our officers murdered in cold blood by bootleggers, but the sheriff and his deputies who arrested the murderers are ordered arrested. Where will this state of affairs lead us to? What will be the result of this latest insult to constituted authority? Do these thugs, thieves and bootleggers and their accomplices believe the people will fold their hands and look on with complacency while our laws are being trampled under foot and dragged in the slime of corruption? Where in the history of court proceeding has such an outrage a parallel? We may even look to Bolshevik Russia for a precedent and come away in bitter disappointment. Casper has drained the cup of lawlessness down to its bitter dregs, and the upright citizen's blood is beginning to boil. Law and order must be preserved. Bolshevism must be crushed. The spirit of outlawry must be smothered. Without respect for constituted authority and reverence for the rule of right, democratic government will crumble, our institutions become a mockery and our glories a dream."

Upon the assurance that a speedy trial would be had the people calmly awaited the action of the courts. At a preliminary trial held before Justice Tubbs on November 16 the three men were held to the district court for trial without bond upon the charge of murder in the first degree. At the December term of the district court in Natrona county a change of venue was demanded and granted and the case was ordered to be tried in Douglas before a Converse county jury at the April term of the district court. The case against Armstrong was the first to come to trial. There was no question in the minds of the people of Casper but a conviction would be had, and if ever a man deserved hanging it was the defendant, but be it said to the everlasting shame of the jurymen, some of the witnesses who gave perjured testimony, and others connected with the trial, a verdict of not guilty was returned by the jury, and once more the people of Natrona were compelled to witness a travesty of justice and the rights of good citizenship flung to the four winds. The charges against Moore and Martin were immediately dismissed after the verdict of not guilty was returned in the Armstrong case, and thus ended the farce with the courts, and the murder of Tom Majors has never been avenged.

JOHN J. CORBETT SLAIN

One of the most deplorable and ruthless murders in the annals of Natrona county was committed on or about January 20, 1920. John J. Corbett, 46 years old, a pioneer ranchman living about five miles southeast of Casper, was shot down in cold blood by a robber whom he surprised in the act of looting the ranch house. The crime was not discovered for about a week after it was committed, for Corbett

lived alone and, although well liked by his neighbors, he visited them rarely. Starving livestock first attracted the attention of Ray Carroll, who resided on an adjoining ranch. He went to the Corbett ranch, and seeing no one about, fed the cattle and two work horses which were tied in the stable. Carroll reported the matter to the sheriff's office that afternoon and the next morning at daylight a posse went to the Corbett place to make an investigation. They found Corbett's body in the cellar which had been locked and the door nailed with several large spikes. There were five bullet wounds, one of them a flesh wound. Any one of the other four would have caused death. A saddle pony was found shot and in the barn were a blood-stained saddle and saddle blanket. The interior of the house was in utter confusion. The robber had emptied the dresser and desk drawers, strewing the contents on the floor. Every possible hiding place for money was ransacked. A grip had been cut open with a knife. Money seemed to be the only object of the robber's search, for he left behind several hundred dollars' worth of jewelry and negotiable papers. A sorrel horse was missing from the ranch and it was assumed that the murderer had ridden it away. It was recovered near Glendo. A rancher there had purchased it and was able to give a complete description of the man from whom he had bought it. This was valuable information, but the chances of capturing the criminal were still slight. Jack Corbett, as he was known to his friends, was well liked by all who knew him and it was said he had not an enemy. Rewards for the apprehension of the murderer amounting to \$1,500 were offered by the county and by friends. Sheriff Pat Royce and County Attorney A. R. Lowey made every effort to solve the mystery. Thousands of circulars were distributed by the sheriff. Every sheriff and chief of police in the country was notified and Sheriff Royce kept in close touch with every peace officer and railroad detective known to him. It was a discouraging chase and dragged on for months. Then on October 7, the sheriff received the following message: "Alamogordo, New Mexico, October 7. Have party in jail that fills description perfectly of R. L. Livingston alias Richie. He is your man without doubt. Can you come and identify? Ben West, Lieutenant Railroad Police." The Alamogordo officials were wired to hold the man and send a photograph for identification. The photograph tallied with the description furnished by the Glendo rancher and the sheriff went to New Mexico. Ben West had just received a post card from Sheriff Royce on the night the fugitive was captured, when he ran into him in a restaurant. The description on the card tallied so closely with the man's appearance that West picked him up and held him for the Natrona county authorities. The

reward of \$1,500 was paid to West shortly afterwards. Sheriff Royce carefully followed all the threads of evidence against the prisoner before resting assured that he had the right man. He traced the fellow's movements from the time he left Casper until he reached Alamogordo. The sheriff traced the guns taken from the Corbett ranch and later pawned and also recovered a pair of chaps identified by the Glendo rancher as those worn by the man from whom he had purchased the sorrel horse. The criminal was brought to Denver and Attorney Lowey gave him the "third degree" for two days in a room in a hotel in that city and finally secured a complete confession. He confessed to a series of burglaries and admitted that he had escaped from the Michigan reformatory and was a deserter from the army. He claimed that his name was neither Livingston nor Richie, but was Jesse R. Atkins. Upon investigation this was found to be correct. The laws of the state of Wyoming do not permit a district judge to pronounce sentence upon a man charged with first degree murder without a trial. Even though Atkins had confessed, it was necessary to hold a trial before a jury and appoint legal counsel for the accused. He was tried in January, 1921, and although the authorities had declared they would seek the death penalty for Corbett's slayer, they found upon investigation that it might be impossible to secure such a verdict. The prisoner was under age and it was discovered that his attorneys would be able to use some damaging insanity evidence. Atkins's mother at last reports was confined in an insane asylum at Kalamazoo and two brothers had been committed to the asylum before their deaths. On January 19, 1921, Atkins pleaded guilty to second degree murder and was sentenced to life imprisonment in the state penitentiary.

#### MURDER AND SUICIDE

Claude Teanor, a cook in a Casper restaurant, shot and killed his wife and then committed suicide in the Wyatt hotel on September 28, 1920. The tragedy was the result of two weeks' brooding by Teanor over an estrangement. Teanor had abused his wife for months previous to their separation and she had been forced to leave him and obtain employment as a waitress. She refused to return to her husband, although he had made many appeals to her. On the morning of the tragedy Teanor went to his wife's room which she occupied with two other girls. None of them had arisen, but Mrs. Teanor got out of bed and admitted him to the room. After Teanor demanded that his wife return to live with him, he asked with an air of finality: "Are you coming back to me?" She replied, "No," whereupon he



drew a revolver and shot her twice, through her heart and her head. She died instantly. He then shot himself under the right eye and died a few hours later at the state hospital.

### ANOTHER MURDERESS "NOT GUILTY"

The quotation that "Hell hath no fury like unto a woman scorned," was truly applicable in the case of Mrs. Jessie Ackerman, who murdered Adelbert Hoffay in Casper on the night of October 6, 1920. The Ackerman and Hoffay families were intimate friends; Mrs. Ackerman called upon Mrs. Hoffay late in the afternoon on the above date and was invited to remain for supper; she said she would remain provided Mr. Hoffay would accompany her home; she said she was afraid to go home alone after dark. Hoffay agreed to go home with her, but after supper he delegated his wife to accompany Mrs. Ackerman home. This caused the Ackerman woman to fly into a rage, and she freely expressed her opinion of Hoffay in abusive and foul language. At about 7:30 Hoffay went to the Ackerman home after his wife; Mrs. Ackerman came to the door, apologized for her hasty words and invited Hoffay to come in. Hoffay said: "I don't care to enter your house after the way you acted tonight." Mrs. Ackerman flew into another rage and cried out: "I'll kill you for that!" and immediately started for another room after a gun, and she came forth with a small gauge shot gun and pressed it against the man's side. He said: "I didn't come here to have trouble with you. I came to take my wife home; go ahead, I'm not afraid of a gun," whereupon Mrs. Ackerman cocked the gun and pulled the trigger. The charge from the gun entered the man's side below the left shoulder blade, the shot ranging downward, puncturing the lung and shattering the spinal column. When the man fell, Mrs. Ackerman stooped over him and said: "Forgive me, Del, before you die." The wounded man was taken to the hospital, where in a short time hemorrhage of the lungs caused his death. The woman was taken to jail and on November 9 at her preliminary trial she was held to the district court for trial without bond upon the charge of murder in the first degree.

The case came to trial on March 13. The court room was jammed full of people, mostly women, during the four days of the trial. Many of the women came to the court room an hour before court convened, and brought lunch with them so they could hold their seats during the entire session of the day. The aisles on the sides and between the seats were crowded with so many people that there was danger of the floor giving way.



Mrs. Hoffay and her nine-year-old son Meredith, both of whom witnessed the shooting, testified that Mrs. Ackerman wilfully, deliberately and maliciously shot their husband and father, and although both underwent the most severe cross-examination their testimony was not shaken in any particular.

Testifying in her own behalf, between sobs, which were put on in a manner that would have been a credit to a professional actress, Mrs. Ackerman admitted that she fired the shot that caused the death of Hoffay, and that she was angry with him when she fired the shot, "but I didn't know the gun was loaded," she said, "and merely used it to scare Hoffay away from my house after we had some words. Never at any time did I threaten to kill him, and when the gun went off I was sorry and terribly scared. I jabbed him with the barrel of the gun and then it exploded."

This was the strongest testimony adduced in behalf of the defendant, but it was enough. The jury cast aside the testimony of the wife and son of the dead man, cast aside the law in the case, cast aside the common-sense judgment that God was supposed to have given them, and yielded to sentiment and sympathy and returned a verdict of not guilty, and another woman with a man's life blood on her hands walked out of the hall of "Justice" free, thus ending the crowning farce ever enacted in the courts of Natrona county.

### DE WALD SHOOTS ROSENBERRY

An old grudge resulted in the killing of Frank Rosenberry, 45, a rancher, by John P. De Wald, a teamster and ranch hand, early on the morning of October 10, 1920, at Bucknum. The men were in the kitchen of a boarding house conducted by Mrs. Alta Rosenberry, a sister-in-law of Rosenberry's. When Rosenberry entered the room, he began to abuse and threaten De Wald, as was his custom. To avoid trouble, De Wald left the house, but Rosenberry followed him, and, with the statement that he was going to kill De Wald right then, he put his hand into his hip pocket. At this, De Wald drew a revolver and fired four shots, two of which took effect. De Wald wired the sheriff's office at Casper, saying he had killed a man and to come for him and bring a coroner. He then calmly awaited the arrival of the officers. Rosenberry was an old-timer in Natrona county and, with his brother, John, operated a ranch on North Casper creek. He was also part owner of the boarding house where he met his death. De Wald was employed by a soda company at Sodium. Previous to his enlistment in the army, he was a sheep herder. He had seen twenty-six months' service abroad during the world war and had taken part

in the Verdun offensive. At the preliminary hearing De Wald was bound over to the district court on a charge of second degree murder and his bond was fixed at \$2,000. It was one of the longest preliminary hearings ever held in Natrona county and there were more witnesses introduced than at any other similar hearing. The trial was held over two terms of court and finally Judge C. O. Brown ordered it brought up on November 3, 1921. Unique in court procedure here, M. W. Purcell, the prosecuting county attorney, defended De Wald, while W. H. Patten and S. E. Phelps acted for the state. Mr. Purcell stepped out of his position as public prosecutor in order to represent De Wald because at the original hearing which was held before Mr. Purcell's appointment to the office, he had been retained by De Wald. His main object, it is said, in defending De Wald was that he had promised De Wald's mother that he would do his utmost to clear her son. The trial developed the facts that Rosenberry and De Wald had clashed several times, that on the day of the shooting, Rosenberry had taken the offensive and that De Wald fired only after repeated threats by Rosenberry against his life. Mr. Purcell defended him valiantly and when the case went to the jury at 10 o'clock on the night of November 3, Mr. Purcell asked that a verdict of not guilty be returned in fifteen minutes. De Wald was acquitted on the first ballot, the jury returning in ten minutes.

### PECKHAM KILLS HIS WIFE

John Peckham killed his wife and committed suicide on February 4, 1921, at the home of Mrs. Beatrice Maltby, whom he also shot and seriously wounded. The Peckhams had been married but eighteen months, but in that time had been separated twice. At the time of the shooting, they had been separated for about a week and Mrs. Peckham was living at the home of Mrs. Maltby. Several times each day, Peckham visited his wife and begged her to return to him. On the day of the shooting, after writing farewell notes to his former wife and his children and his father and mother, he went to see his wife again. She refused his appeals to return to him and he drew a gun and shot her. Mrs. Maltby interceded for Mrs. Peckham and he turned on her and shot her through the breast. He then shot Mrs. Peckham once more and turned the gun on himself and sent a bullet through his brain. Peckham was an employee of the Midwest field garage and Mrs. Peckham had been employed in Casper as a domestic. They were both about 49 years of age.

## CONVICTED MURDERER ESCAPES JAIL

On March 10, 1921, Edward Shuster, about 30 years of age, a taxi driver, was shot and killed by L. B. Nicholson, a former police officer of Casper. Shuster had been called to a chop suey restaurant on the Sandbar, and when he drove up in front of the place, Nicholson is said to have approached him and after the two men had exchanged heated words, Nicholson shot Shuster and ran away. Shuster was found to be dying from a bullet wound in the neck. There were many witnesses to the affray, one of them being a policeman, Earl Barkalow. He made no effort to pursue Nicholson and was later arrested and then dismissed from the police force on a formal charge of cowardice. Nicholson was taken into custody near the scene of the shooting after he had made an ineffectual attempt to dispose of two revolvers. One was found in an ash can and the other was lying on the ground. Nicholson had been discharged from the Casper police department three years previous on a charge of grafting. Later, he was arrested on a charge of assault with intent to kill for firing on Police Captain W. E. Kilgore. This charge against him was quashed, however. He was also said to have been convicted of murder at one time in Campbell county in connection with the killing of a sheep herder, but secured his release on a supreme court decision. Shuster was said to have borne a good reputation among his associates. In the trial of Nicholson, it was brought out that the two men had borne a personal grudge against one another for some time and that the shooting was the culmination of this trouble. After an eventful trial, which was bitterly fought on both sides, the jury balloted for twenty-three hours and returned a verdict of manslaughter. He was sentenced on September 16, 1921, to serve from fifteen to twenty years in the state penitentiary, but on the night of October 11, 1921, Nicholson and five other prisoners escaped from the Natrona county jail. The prisoners had been locked in their cells for the night on the east side of the jail. Friends on the outside sawed the bars from one of the windows on the west side with a motor saw, cut the lock on the master lock box, and opened the cell doors, permitting the six men to get away. It is thought they escaped in waiting automobiles. Two Mexicans, who were among the six fugitives, were captured as they were attempting to leave town in an automobile. In due time two of the other men were apprehended, but a nation-wide search for Nicholson in particular was instituted and there were rumors of his capture at various points, but no definite trace of him was ever found.

## MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF JOE REEDER

J. S. Reeder, proprietor of a shoe store and shoe repair shop in Casper, was shot and killed at about 6:30 in the evening on January 11, 1921, while on his way home from his store. The motive was supposed to be robbery, for Mr. Reeder had on his person diamonds valued at about \$3,000 and quite a large sum of money, but the robbers evidently were so anxious to make their escape after the shooting that they did not attempt to take from the body the money or the valuables. At that time there were a great many hold-ups and robberies being committed in Casper, and two men named Neil and Probe were arrested upon suspicion of having committed the crime, but on account of the lack of evidence, after a most thorough investigation, they were turned loose and no other arrests ever followed. Residents of the neighborhood where the dead man was found, which was within a half block of his home, heard the reports from four shots, and there was a clear distinction between the first three reports and the last one. When found the dead man held in his right hand a .25 caliber automatic revolver and three shots had been fired from it. There were some people who were of the opinion that he had taken his own life, but when the bullet was removed from his neck it was found to be a .45 caliber, and the theory of suicide was dispelled and the conclusion was that he was met by a hold-up, but instead of submitting he attempted to shoot the man or men who were attempting to rob him but failed to hit them and in order to make good their escape they shot him.

## MEXICAN KILLS HIS PARTNER

Jim Ladas, 55, proprietor of the Burlington cafe in Casper, was shot and killed on June 6, 1921, by Nick Camets, 50, after the two men had quarreled over the ownership of the place. Camets purchased a .38 Colt's revolver and went to the cafe and demanded of Ladas that he give him the half interest in the business that had once been his. Ladas ran out of the restaurant upon being threatened by Camets and started down Wolcott street with Camets following. Camets fired one shot which did not take effect but served to attract hundreds of people to the scene. As they neared the Ohio Oil company's offices, Camets fired three times, all three shots taking effect. Ladas started across the street, but was knocked down by an auto truck. As he lay prostrate in the street, Camets stepped up and took deliberate aim, and shot him through the right lung. After a short chase, Camets was captured by Joe Rodman, a former police officer. In September, 1921, at the term of the district court, Camets pleaded

guilty to second degree murder, and his sentence was twenty-five to thirty years in the penitentiary.

### ONE WOMAN CONVICTED

John W. Delury was killed June 16, 1921, by Mrs. Ida Graham, who shot him because he wrecked her home in Oklahoma. Delury and Mrs. Graham had lived together as man and wife in the oil fields of Texas for two years, but they quarreled and Mrs. Graham went to Duncan, Oklahoma. Delury followed her and when she refused to resume her former relationship with him, he demolished her furniture with an axe and cut into bits with a razor, her curtains and other articles of furnishings and equipment; then he left her and came to Casper. When Mrs. Graham learned where he had located she followed him here and appealed to the prosecuting attorney of the county to have him arrested, but the alleged crime having been committed in another state, a warrant could not be issued. During the evening Mrs. Graham saw Delury in the "Sandbar district" where there was a carnival. Mrs. Graham at her trial on September 11 testified that Delury said to her: "Now, damn you, I have you," and made a motion as if to strike her with a knife, and she shot him in self-defense, but the fact that she was looking for Delury, and carried a gun was the damaging evidence against her, and the jury, after deliberating five hours, returned a verdict finding her guilty of second degree murder. She was sentenced to serve from twenty-one to twenty-two years in the penitentiary.

### HOMICIDE ON THE RANGE

On July 11, 1921, John Nennes, 30, an employee of the William (Scotty) Henry Sheep outfit, was shot and killed by Ed. Holmes, an employee of Robert Wilson, about twenty-five miles northwest of Arminto. Each of the men had a band of sheep in his care and they were feeding close together. A dispute arose over a water hole first and after that the two herders quarreled frequently. Nennes is said to have charged Holmes with encroaching on the Henry range. The trouble between them became serious when the two bands of sheep drifted so close together that Holmes walked between them to keep them from running together. Nennes objected to this and becoming hostile told Holmes: "I have carried a gun for twenty years and I am looking for action." He went to his horse and took a .25-.30 caliber Winchester from the holster. As he turned toward Holmes, the latter fired a rifle shot into Nennes' heart. Holmes reported the



matter at the Henry ranch and then returned to the range and watched both bands of sheep until the officers arrived. At the preliminary trial he was exonerated.

#### WHITE WOMAN SHOTS NEGRO

Robert Brown, a negro 58 years of age, who attempted to force his way into a boarding house in Casper owned by Mrs. Pearl Williams, was shot and killed by the landlady on October 2, 1921. Brown had been calling Mrs. Williams over the 'phone every day for a week asking her to meet him. Mrs. Williams did not know who the man was, and she reported the trouble to the police, but they were unable to locate him. On the night of the shooting the negro appeared at the front door of the Williams boarding house and announced that "I am the man who has been 'phoning to you, honey," and Mrs. Williams started shooting without further ado. Six shots were fired, two of which took effect, from the result of which the man died. The house where the negro lived was searched and clothing and articles valued at several thousand dollars, which had been stolen from residences in Casper, were found. Mrs. Williams was exonerated and should have been given a medal.

#### WOULD-BE HOLD-UPS ARE KILLED

On the night of December 21, 1921, Sheriff Joe L. Marquis was informed by an anonymous telephone call that the grocery store of M. L. Small at 446 South Oak street, Casper, was going to be robbed. Three officers were sent out from the sheriff's office and two of them concealed themselves in the store, while the third was posted as lookout on the outside. The proprietor of the store was instructed to appear surprised upon the arrival of the highwaymen and to obey any commands given by them. Scarcely had the defense been planned when two men stopped in front of the store, adjusted masks and entered the store. With drawn guns they commanded the proprietor to throw up his hands. The same order was given to J. K. Willis, in charge of the meat department. The two men were ordered to go to the rear of the store. Small started to run and was fired upon. At this point the officers stepped out from their hiding places and a pitched battle followed. When the mêlée subsided, both robbers were dead and Willis had been shot in the arm accidentally by one of the officers. One of the robbers was later identified as George Otto Boche, a dope fiend, and the other was believed to be J. S. Brown, a gunman who had been active through the west.



When the bodies were taken to the morgue they were erroneously identified as Earl Pike and Barry Gorden, two notorious criminals. It was later learned, however, that at the same time the Casper affair was being enacted, Gorden and Pike were attempting to loot a store in Billings. They were trapped by a telephone call and one of them, Earl Pike, was killed. This is the most unusual coincidence ever recorded in criminal records. Another unusual circumstance connected with this case is the fact that Willis, who was working in the store where the attempted hold-up occurred, brought action against Sheriff Marquis to recover a large sum of money for damages on account of having been wounded by one of the officers who was shooting at the hold-ups.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

“Why drag into the light of day  
The errors of an age long passed away?”  
I answer, “For the lesson that they teach—  
The tolerance of opinion and of speech.”

In justification of the publication of a brief history of the many crimes that have been committed in the county from 1888 until 1922, and in answer to the criticism that will surely come from some sources, the author will merely say that he did not make the history, but has recorded the plain facts, and every statement and assertion is verified by the court records. Not to publish the details of any of the crimes that have been committed in the county would not be publishing a history, and to record the details of one crime, all should be recorded.

## Hole-in-the-Wall Gang and Other Bad Men

DEPUTY SHERIFF WATSON AND OTHER HORSE THIEVES

ON Tuesday evening, September 10, 1889, Sheriff John Williams of Douglas and the sheriff from Sundance, in Crook county, arrived in Casper on a special train, and about midnight they served warrants on Phil Watson, Jess Lockwood and James ("Pecos") Hughes, on the charge of horse stealing. At the time he was arrested Watson was the town marshal of Casper and deputy sheriff in this part of Carbon county; Lockwood was an ex-cow puncher, but at that time was a hanger-on around the saloons; "Pecos" was a gambler, and was wanted as a witness against the other two men. The men were taken to Sundance and given a preliminary examination, and they were held to the district court for trial, Watson's bond being placed at \$1,500 and Lockwood's at \$5,000. Hughes' deposition was taken and he was allowed to go his way. About ten days later E. J. ("Tex") Healy, whose homestead was on Fish creek, about thirty miles southwest from Casper, was arrested upon the charge of being an accomplice of Lockwood and Watson. He was placed under bond of \$500, which was secured by J. J. Hurt. "Tex" lost no time in leaving the country, and has not since been seen, and his bond was forfeited.

At the trial in the district court it was proven that Lockwood, Watson and Healy were connected with an organized gang of horse thieves, who operated in Montana and Northern and Central Wyoming. The horses were gathered up in Montana and the northern part of Wyoming, and driven into the Sweetwater country by a couple of the gang, where they were turned over to Lockwood and "Tex"; they were then driven to the homestead of "Tex" on Fish creek, and then brought to Casper and turned over to Watson, who would sell them here or ship them to an eastern market.

P. C. Nicolaysen bought one of the horses from Watson that had been stolen from Crook county, and Dave Graham loaned some money on several others, and these two citizens of Casper went to Sundance as witnesses for the state. Both of the defendants were convicted, and Lockwood was sentenced to serve a term of eight years in the penitentiary and Watson was sentenced to a term of five years.

When they had served their time they are said to have gone into Montana, but they have ever since gone around Casper.

It will be noted that Lockwood and "Tex" were on the coroner's jury who inquired into the death of James Averell and Ella Watson, who were hanged by Sweetwater cattlemen in July of that year, and that Watson was the officer who went out from Casper and cut down the bodies, and it has been said that the whole gang, including Averell and the Watson woman, were working together, but whether that is true or not, it will be noted that none of them escaped being punished for their misdeeds.

Not long after Watson had been convicted and sentenced to the penitentiary, Sheriff Frank Hadsell came to Casper from his home in Rawlins, and he was indulging in considerable raillery with the people of Casper over the fact that they had signed a petition requesting him and the board of county commissioners to appoint Watson deputy sheriff for this section of Carbon county, and after telling the people that all one had to do was to take one good look at Watson and they would have known he was a rascal and a thief, a letter was produced which Sheriff Hadsell had written to some of his friends in Casper asking them to circulate a petition requesting Watson's appointment. Like the good sport that he is, Hadsell acknowledged writing the letter, and openly said that up until the time he was arrested he thought Watson was all right, "but," he said, "people have no right to keep personal letters like that, and springing them on a fellow when he has no chance to get out of it."

While he was an officer it pleased Watson to prove to the people of Casper that he was a competent official and a brave man, and one afternoon when a "bad man" rode into town from the west and had imbibed freely of corn juice he became so boisterous that some one in the saloon requested him to tone down a little. In a flash the "bad man" whipped out two six-guns and fired them into the ceiling, then backed up to the wall and threatened to shoot the first man that made a menacing move. Just about that time Watson happened to come in; his sheriff's badge was prominently displayed, and the "bad man" pointed both pistols at him, warning him not to come forward another step. Watson said not a word; neither did he stop, falter or hesitate to walk straight ahead toward the "bad man" and the two big guns pointing directly at him. When within two feet of the man the deputy sheriff made a quick draw, and in less than a second his two six-guns were pointing from his hip in the direction of the man's stomach.

"Give me those guns," said Watson, just as cool as though he were asking the fellow for a match. The big "bad man" eyed Watson

for a second and then handed over his artillery. Watson then told him to get out of town and to get quick, and the fellow got. Watson's act of bravery was told and retold for months afterwards, but the people at that time did not know the "bad man" was one of Watson's horse thief pals; that he and Watson had been out on the range together all morning, and that the whole proceeding had been fixed up and rehearsed several hours before.

The "Tex" ranch on Fish creek was on the old Oregon Trail, near where a government stage station had been located, and it is said of "Tex" that the hungry and tired traveler who passed that way never left the place without being well fed and properly cared for. The "Tex" ranch extended about seven miles south of his Fish creek ranch house to the Platte river, about twenty-five miles from Casper, where there is a sharp bend in the stream. The banks on the south and east are protected by high walls and to the north there is a stretch of meadow land, and it was here that "Tex" kept the horses that were brought in from the north by the gang of thieves. In those early days this was the smoothest gang of thieves that operated in this part of the country. Half of the gang worked in Montana and Northern Wyoming, while the other half carried on their operations in the central part of the state. The horses were kept in this stretch of meadow land, and it was here that the exchange of horses was made, the northern horses being brought to Casper where they were sold and shipped and the horses that had been stolen from the central and southern part of the state were taken to the north where they were disposed of.

### THE HOLE-IN-THE-WALL

No two names in Wyoming are so well known to the outside world as the Hole-in-the-Wall and Powder river. To many they epitomize all that might be written of our lawlessness, our feuds and our state's wild youth with its trappings of guns and holsters, spurs and lariats. Many a boy in the detective story stage of his literary studies is thrilled by the magic spell of these names pregnant with tales of rustlers and banditti. It is singular that these two most widely known names should be so closely linked geographically. The Hole-in-the-Wall is in the Powder River country. The water flowing through the "Hole" empties into Powder river, and its ensanguined waters, red with the blood of 10,000 mythical bandits, finally mingle with the more peaceful but muddy tide of the Missouri.

Our soldiers in the great world war carried the slogan of "Powder river" to every part of Central Europe. Boys from Salt Creek

shouted it as they helped turn the tide of the whole war at Château Thierry. It echoed through the forest of the Argonne and cheered the lads who bravely rushed the bridges of the Meuse. Where less serious work was in hand and Sammy knew a little relaxation this yell of "Powder River" was a vent for his spirits. Parisians who knew no other English word could say "Poudre Rive," and fan the air with a hat. It is something of which we might boast that a state with a population equal only to the city of Denver and a congressional delegation of three gave the entire Union its battle cry in the biggest war ever waged by man. Such phrases as "Powder river, let 'er buck," "Powder river, a mile wide and an inch deep," can be heard in the logging camps of Maine and the salmon canneries of Oregon. The ancient war cries of "St. Denis" and "St. George," the helmet of Navarre waving its white plume over Ivry's bloody field, must make room for a noisy and barbaric successor from the pinnacled summits of a new continent.

No one can say just when or just where the shout of "Powder River" had its noisy birth. But it certainly was a lusty and well-lunged child from the beginning. It first grew into popularity at either Casper or Buffalo. These two towns were the chief resorts of the "boys" from the Powder River country. Even a drunken man will shout for the home ball team and bet on a home horse. Men from Powder river, with a few drinks under their belts, had to yell. So did men from Meadow creek and Sweetwater. You were expected to proclaim that the locality you hailed from was about the toughest on earth and try to prove it. "Powder River" is more easily shouted than such names as Sweetwater, Stinking Water or the Platte. Its vowels gave it a pre-eminence. It grew to be almost universally used when you felt the need of intensive yelling. There are moments when nothing but yelling will do. There are times to laugh and times to sing, but there are other times when we simply want to get out and yell. As to date, it can be said that throughout Natrona, Johnson and Converse counties its general use on festive occasions dates from the period between 1895 and 1900. There can be no registry of birth for a thing of such slow growth.

The Hole-in-the-Wall first gained a national notoriety through the train robbery at Wilcox, Wyoming, on June 2, 1899. The robbers left the Union Pacific railroad and headed north to Casper. Crossing the Platte on the Casper bridge, they headed toward the Hole-in-the-Wall and eventually escaped into Montana. This robbery attracted wide attention, and newspaper men all over the Union were smitten with the spell of the name of "Hole-in-the-Wall." Paragraphers and joke-smiths roped and hogtied it in record time. Following this,



every fugitive from justice in the Rocky Mountain region was reported in Chicago and New York papers to be "headed for the Hole-in-the-Wall." Escaped convicts in New Mexico and embezzling cashiers from Denver were said to be en route for the capacious Hole. One nauseated writer on a Chicago paper asked why Wyoming did not fill up the Hole with dirt. He suggested fresnos and wheel scrapers as a remedy for police inefficiency. The name "Hole-in-the-Wall" is such a hint and help to a lurid imagination that a famishing literary hack seizes on it with a fiendish avidity.

It is scarcely necessary to once more announce to our Deadwood Dicks and Nick Carters that the fearsome Hole is no hole at all. It is a wide and beautiful canyon by which a stream finds its way through a remarkable ridge about thirty miles long, known as the Red Wall. This wall of red earth and sandstone parallels the Big Horn mountains for many miles on their southern extremity in Natrona county. Between the ridge and the mountains lies a broad valley through which flows Buffalo creek. On the upper waters of this creek lies the old Houck and Mahoney ranch, one of the oldest in the county and now owned by the Buffalo Creek Cattle company. The creek winds eastward between the Big Horns and the Red Wall, seeking a chance to break through, but does not find it until the break in the wall is found near the border of Natrona and Johnson counties. Here the creek escapes into the lower country and gives to the world the name of "The Hole-in-the-Wall." Who first gave the canyon this name is not known. There is a probability that it came through the group of Englishmen headed by the two Frewens who in 1878 located a ranch on the Middle and North forks of Powder river. These men had birth, money and brains. Yet, with all three, they failed to make a success of the range cattle business. They built a fine log ranch house with fire places and mantels reminiscent of the stately homes they had known in England. They gave names to many localities. A great castled rock on Castle creek is called "Frewen Castle," after Mr. Mortimer Frewen, one of the party. They also gave Castle creek its name. Their native isle was a land of castles. There was a spot in London known as the "Hole-in-the-Wall." As early as 1722, Mr. Tom Brown, a well known writer of that day, says: "Address me at Mr. Seward's at the 'Hole-in-the-Wall,' in Baldwin's Gardens." Some of these Londoners at the Frewen ranch in the early eighties probably christened the canyon with its unforgettable name.

A cowboy battle near the Hole-in-the-Wall in July, 1897, gave the locality its first bit of state-wide notoriety. In this fight Bob Smith was killed, while his brother-in-law, Al Smith, and Bob and Lee Devine were wounded. Peace held her reign for two years and





THE "HOLE-IN-THE-WALL" CABIN



THE "HOLE-IN-THE-WALL" RANCH, RED BLUFFS IN THE DISTANCE



then, in 1899, came the Union Pacific train robbery at Wilcox. The sensational escape of these bandits to Montana through the Hole-in-the-Wall region drew the eyes of the whole nation to this canyon and hung the picture of its rugged beauties in the Hall of Fame among other immortal cavities. The name of the Red Wall was also lurid and suggestive enough to please. Perched on its liver-colored rim-rocks a morbid imagination could run wanton and youthful bandits could stalk precociously. We will write of these two battles in their chronological order.

Bob Devine was foreman of the CY Cattle outfit. The CY was one of the largest cattle companies in the state, being owned by J. M. Carey & Brother. The CY riders, together with those of the Ogallala company and the Pugsleys on Meadow creek, in Converse county, were preparing to work the Red Wall country, but had been warned to keep out.

In 1897, Devine, who was a very determined man, gave public notice that he intended to cover that region and recover anything with a CY brand on it. Bob and Al Smith, who were brothers-in-law, with Bob Taylor, put themselves at the head of the army of defense and called out the home guards. The reckless spirit and calm courage of an earlier day on the open range was certainly not lacking, even in 1897, as witness the following notice from Devine, published in the *Casper Tribune* in July, 1897:

“Casper, Wyoming, July 19, 1897.

“Editor, *Casper Tribune*.

“I have seen all sorts of reports bearing upon the John R. Smith and Nolan gang stopping the round-up from working the Hole-in-the-Wall country. They will have a hard time of it. Neither the CY boys, the Keystone nor the Pugsley outfits are hunting a fight. We are all working men and only want such cattle as belong to our employers and it is an indisputable fact that the Hole-in-the-Wall is a hiding place for thieves, and has been for years. Thousands of dollars' worth of cattle have been stolen by these outlaws, brands burned out and their own brands substituted. Their friends then help them to dispose of the burned cattle. Every year I have gotten back cattle from them that were taken from their mothers and lots of cattle on which the brands were changed. I am going to work that country and have asked the sheriffs of Natrona and Johnson counties to work with us and see that everybody is treated right. The time has come for all honest working men to declare themselves in favor of law and justice. And, if those men want to fight us, when we know we are right, I say fight.

“R. M. DEVINE.”

As a further illustration of the spirit of the times and the nature of this feud we reprint a reply to Devine. It is also a good example of that sharp and incisive literary style so much affected by our “Riders of the Purple Sage.” A lack of this directness and this profanity is what spells failure for all western plays. The hero cannot swear hard enough. To the western listener it all sounds weak and insipid. When in the arena our finest swearers, like our finest wrestlers, find their best holds barred.

### The answer to Devine's letter follows:

"Bob Devine you think you have played hell you have just begun you will get your dose there is men enuff up here yet to kill you. we are going to get you or lose 12 more men you must stay out of this country if you want to live we are not going to take any chances any more but will get you any way we can we want one hair a piece out of that damned old chin of yours you have give us the worst of it all the way through and you must stay out or die. you had better keep your damned outfit out if you want to keep them. don't strick that damned old gray head of yours in this country again if you don't want it shot off we are the 12 men appointed a purpose to get you if you don't stay out of here.

"REVENGE GANGE."

Devine and his men disregarded the threat of the "Revenge Gange" and went to the Hole-in-the-Wall at the appointed time to gather their cattle, and on July 23, 1897, the fight occurred. A condensed description of the fight, which appeared in Casper newspapers under date of July 29, 1897, and several subsequent issues is as follows:

"All Casper was precipitated into a feverish excitement last Friday morning when a party of eight riders, headed by R. M. Devine, foreman of the CY round-up, came into town with a captured cattle rustler and announced that a battle had been fought between the round-up boys and some rustlers up in the Red Wall country, about three miles west of the far-famed and notorious Hole-in-the-Wall ranch. Devine and his son, Lee, both of whom were in the party that brought the prisoner in, participated in the fight and both had been wounded, the senior Devine receiving only a slight flesh wound from a bullet from Bob Smith's six-shooter, and Lee Devine having a bullet wound from Bob Taylor's six-shooter which passed diagonally through the muscles of his lower right forearm, ranging from the elbow toward the wrist. The others of the party saw that their prisoner was safely locked within the steel cage in the county jail.

"The news of the battle had been anticipated, since Devine had gone in the face of the oft-repeated threats made by the cattle thieves that they would kill him if he ever dared to come to their country.

"Last Wednesday night the two round-ups camped at the famous Bar C ranch, which is ten or twelve miles from the notorious Hole-in-the-Wall ranch. On the afternoon of Thursday a party of twelve men rode from camp in search of a bunch of cattle that they had been told was thrown up back of the McDonald pasture and were being held there. The party consisted of R. M. Devine, Lee Devine and Tom McDonald, of the CY; Bill Rogers and Lee Mathers, of the Ogallala; Ike Dedman, Doc Dildine, Frank Ramsey and Charles Davis, of Pugsley's outfit; and Joe LaFors, United States deputy marshal; and Jim Drummond, Montana live stock inspector; and Walter Monnett, a "rep" for the Circle L outfit.

"In passing the Hole-in-the-Wall ranch the cow-boys stopped to inquire about the cattle they were in search of, but found no one there. Riding on, they had gone about three miles in a roundabout course when they saw three men on horseback coming toward them. These men were Bob and Al Smith and Bob Taylor. When they came up together many recognized and addressed each other in a friendly way. The men in both parties stopped and the three men were asked if they had seen any cattle belonging to the CY or the other outfits. Without answering the question Bob Smith commenced to draw his six-shooter and remarked to Devine: 'You damn old son of a b——, I am going to get you this time!'

"Devine said, 'Don't you shoot me, Smith.'

"Bob Smith yelled: 'Yes, I will, you old son of a b——,' and leveling his six-shooter at Devine, fired.

"The war then commenced. More than an hundred shots were fired by the men on both sides, and when the smoke of battle had cleared away, it was found that Bob Smith was mortally wounded, Bob Devine's horse was killed, and Devine and a number of the men on both sides were slightly wounded. During the shooting the men

were yelling and cursing, the horses were running and pitching, and the dust raised by the horses and the smoke from the firing of the guns made it almost impossible for the men to see each other.

"In five minutes the shooting ceased. Al Smith escaped on his horse after his six-shooter had been shot out of his right hand and the bullet had torn the flesh from his thumb and entered his wrist, Bob Taylor had dropped from his horse and got into a little washout, and threw up his hands and asked for mercy; Bob Smith was lying on the ground, calling for the men to come to him. The men went to him and rolled him over. He told them not to shoot him again; that he was already mortally wounded. He said that he had commenced the fight and had fired the first shot.

"Taylor was placed on a horse without a bridle, but a rope was around its neck. He was taken to the Bar C ranch and subsequently was brought to Casper, but the tragedy having occurred in Johnson county, the authorities in this county had no jurisdiction over him, and he was turned over to the Johnson county authorities, who brought no action against him.

"Bob Devine gave himself over to the Johnson county authorities and was placed under bond of \$15,000 to appear for trial at the next term of the district court, but the officers of the law from both Natrona and Johnson counties thought it best to avoid further trouble and discontinue the feud, if possible, and the case against Devine was dismissed.

"About the first of August, Devine and twenty-seven men again went to the Hole-in-the-Wall prepared to fight if necessary and get their cattle out of there. They succeeded in bringing several hundred head of cattle out of the Hole, and although they could see a great many men on horseback at a distance, they were not disturbed."

In contradiction of the above story, the details of which were gleaned from Devine, Bob Taylor said that after Smith had been shot he rode with him about half a mile into a gulch, when Smith became so weak from the loss of blood and the suffering from his wound he could ride no farther. He helped the wounded man off his horse and laid him on the ground, remaining with him a short time, and then he came back toward Devine and his men with his hands raised, and asked for help for Smith. He said he voluntarily surrendered in order that he might get help for his wounded companion. They all started for the spot where Smith was lying helpless and dying, and while on their way Devine shot at him while his hands were up, and no doubt would have murdered him had it not been for Joe LaFors, who knocked Devine's gun aside just as he was about to fire and remarked: "For God's sake, don't murder the man!" When they reached the place where Smith was lying on the ground the wounded man was pleading for water, but Devine refused to allow anyone to give him water or relieve his suffering in any way. They remained here for nearly half an hour when Tom Gardner and several other men came riding up. Devine ordered Gardner and the other men to hand over their guns, but they refused to do so. Gardner said he was going to get some water for Smith, and Devine said he would kill anyone who attempted to help him in any way. In the face of this threat Gardner went to the creek, which was close by, and getting some water in his hat brought it to the dying man. Devine did not attempt to shoot Gardner.

Bob Devine and his son remained in Natrona county with the CY outfit for several years, and subsequently moved to Missouri, where they established themselves on a farm and they have lived there peacefully ever since.

Although Bob Devine claimed the credit, or blame, whichever the case may be, for the killing of Bob Smith, it is said that Joe LaFors, who was the only cool-headed man in the bunch at the time of the shooting, fired the fatal shot.

The Hole-in-the-Wall country is now a quiet, peaceful pasturage for sheep and cattle. The automobile has made State street and Broadway safer haunts for the bandit and robber than was the rough mountain and the gloomy canyon in the day of the saddle-horse. The same swift auto makes the Hole-in-the-Wall a pleasant picnic ground for pleasure-seekers from Casper. On any Sunday you can enjoy its scenic beauties and meet nothing more deadly than an occasional kodak fiend or a chicken sandwich.

### THE WILCOX TRAIN ROBBERY

The Union Pacific continental west-bound mail train was held up, dynamited and robbed at about 1 o'clock on the morning of June 2, 1899, near Wilcox, a lonely station on the Wyoming division about 100 miles south of Casper. The train was flagged, two men entered the engine cab, and with drawn revolvers ordered the engineer to pull across the bridge and stop. The order was complied with, and then the bridge was blown up with dynamite in order to prevent the second section of the train, which was ten minutes behind, from crossing. The first section of the train was then run a couple of miles farther west and the express, baggage and mail cars were looted and the safe in the express car was blown open with dynamite and about \$60,000 in unsigned bank notes were secured. More than one hundred pounds of dynamite was found near the scene of the robbery the following day. The robbers had their horses tied a short distance from where the robbery occurred, and after securing their loot they mounted their horses and headed toward the north.

Word was received in Casper for the authorities to be on the lookout for the men, and W. E. Tubbs, with six men, was sent to Alcova to guard the bridge at that place. These men were on guard thirty-six hours, nearly all the time being exposed to a heavy down-pour of rain.

On Saturday afternoon a special Union Pacific train arrived in Casper over the Northwestern tracks with half a dozen railroad detectives, and Sheriff Joe Hazen, of Converse county. Sheriff



Hazen, Sheriff Oscar Hiestand of Natrona county, and Detective Vizzard of the Union Pacific were put in charge at this point. No trace of the robbers was discovered until Sunday morning, when Al Hudspeth came in from the north and reported that three men were camped in a cabin on Casper creek, about six miles northwest from town. He said he rode up toward the cabin and two men came out with rifles in their hands and told him to "hit the road, and hit it quick." Hudspeth came to town and reported the occurrence. It was learned afterwards that the three men were in Casper Saturday night and secured food and provisions, and undoubtedly were assisted by friends in making their escape out of town and across the Platte river bridge. Up to this time the identity of the robbers was not known, but it was later learned that they were George Currie, whose brother was an employee in the Chicago & Northwestern railroad round house here, Harve Logan, and one of the Roberts boys, three of the worst outlaws in the west.

A posse of men composed of Sheriff Hiestand and Sheriff Hazen, Dr. J. F. Leeper, E. T. Payton, Al Hudspeth, J. F. Crawford, Sam Fish, J. B. Bradley, Lee Devine, Tom McDonald and Charles Heagney immediately left in pursuit of the outlaws.

The robbers had left the cabin, but their tracks were followed to a point about five miles west from the Horse ranch on the Salt Creek road. At this point the robbers dismounted behind a hill and when the pursuers were within half a mile of them the robbers fired about twenty shots at the officers. A horse belonging to one of the posse was shot, and while Sheriff Hiestand was adjusting his rifle, with the bridle rein thrown over his left arm, a bullet struck the ground in front of his horse and the animal broke loose and ran away. The sheriff walked fifteen miles to secure another horse and then he came to town to get a better mount and to order provisions for the men on the chase, who had been in the saddle from Sunday noon until Monday night without anything to eat. Sheriff Hazen and the other men kept on the trail of the bandits all Sunday night, and on Monday in the forenoon Sheriff Hazen and Dr. Leeper dismounted and were walking up a draw, following the track of the outlaws' horses. The sheriff and the doctor were about one hundred yards apart when the sheriff called that he was on the trail. Dr. Leeper came up to within about six feet of Sheriff Hazen when the robbers, who were concealed behind a rock, opened fire on the two men. Sheriff Hazen was hit in the stomach and the bullet went through his body. Dr. Leeper fell to the ground, to avoid being hit by the bullets that were being shot at him by the bandits, the firing continuing for about ten minutes. The doctor administered to the wounded man as best he could when

the firing ceased and the robbers took this opportunity to make their escape to Castle creek, which was only a short distance below. They waded down this stream for several hundred yards in order to throw the posse off their trail. They left their horses and some of the plunder they had taken from the train. Their horses were caught and were ridden by some of the posse in pursuit of them.

Sheriff Hazen was brought to Casper, and from here he was taken to Douglas on a special train, and on Tuesday morning at about 5 o'clock he died from the effects of his wound. By this time more than fifty men were scouring the country in pursuit of the outlaws, and all kinds of reports were brought in by the men who came from the range after provisions and ammunition. The robbers, according to reports, were seen in half a dozen different places at the same time, and the number in the gang ranged from four to ten. It was finally learned, after about a week, that the three bandits, after shooting Sheriff Hazen, went north down Castle creek, and the next morning ate breakfast at Jim Nelson's sheep camp, which was located on Sullivan's springs, where John DeVore was herding sheep, but at the time DeVore was ignorant of the identity of the men or the crimes they had committed. From here they went into the Tisdale mountains and then made their way to Hill's ranch, on the north fork of the Powder river, near Kaycee, where they were furnished, or at least secured a change of clothing, and with fresh horses made their escape farther north. By this time the United States marshal, with a number of deputies, ten picked men from the Buffalo militia, a dozen railroad detectives and at least one hundred men, and half a dozen bloodhounds had joined in the hunt, but the outlaws were now among friends and they were furnished with food, shelter and horses, and their trail was covered up by their friends, and they made good their escape, probably to the Hole-in-the-Wall country, and from there they scattered in different directions, and nothing definite was heard from any of them until April 19, 1900, when Sheriff Oscar Hiestand received a telegram from Thompsons, Utah, which stated that George Currie had been shot and killed by Sheriff Tyler of Grand county, Utah. Currie had been stealing cattle in that country for a number of months. The sheriff came upon Currie unexpectedly, and ordered him to surrender. Currie said: "I will not surrender to you or to anyone," and thereupon shot at the officer, but missed. Currie immediately mounted his horse, and a running fight ensued for about six miles, but finally the sheriff succeeded in shooting Currie through the back of the head, killing him instantly. Currie was positively identified by John DeVore, the sheep herder from Casper, at whose wagon the bandit visited while being chased through Natrona county

the year before. The body of Currie was taken to Chadron, Nebraska, by his father where it was interred, and thus ended the career of "Flat Nose George," who was a cow puncher in Central Wyoming in the early days until he turned bad and joined the "wild bunch." He had robbed postoffices and country stores, stolen horses and cattle, and had held up trains and looted the mail and express cars, and justly merited the ignominious death that was meted out to him.

Harve Logan, alias "Kid Curry," the leader of the bandits, and undoubtedly the boldest and worst desperado that ever infested the west, who was positively known to have killed at least nine men, but who was accused of having committed more than forty murders, went to Montana from the Hole-in-the-Wall country, where he remained for about two years. On July 3, 1901, he and his gang held up a Great Northern train near Warner, Montana. They secured \$40,000 in new bank notes, but the notes lacked the signatures of the bank officials, as did those that were secured at the Wilcox robbery. Logan then left Montana, going to Knoxville, Tennessee. In Knoxville he went into a clothing store and made a purchase of some wearing apparel, tendering a fifty-dollar bank note in payment. The clerk did not have enough money in the register to make change and asked Logan to wait until it was sent to a nearby bank. At the bank the cashier recognized it as one of the notes stolen at the hold-up of the Great Northern train in Montana. A telephone message was sent to police headquarters, and two detectives were detailed to arrest Logan. The officers entered the clothing store with drawn revolvers, but had not counted on their man. Logan saw them first, and in the fight that followed he shot both, wounding one so badly that he was in a precarious condition for several months, but finally recovered. Logan escaped from the store, and knocking the driver off an ice wagon, drove away in the vehicle at top speed. He was later run down and captured.

He was tried in Knoxville at the November term of the United States court, being charged with canceling bank notes to the amount of \$9,620, and with forging the names of the Montana bank officials to the notes, and with passing and having in his possession illegal money. He was convicted on ten counts, and he stood to receive a sentence of not less than thirty years and not more than ninety years in the federal prison, but before he was sentenced he escaped from the Knoxville jail. One afternoon at about five o'clock, while the guard in the jail had his back toward him, Logan threw a wire over his head, lassoing him and tying him tight to the bars of the cage. He secured the wire by unwrapping it from a broom handle that had been left in his cell. Having one entire floor to himself, Logan next secured two pistols

that had been placed in the corridor of the jail for use by the officers if needed. When the jailer appeared in answer to a knock on the door of the corridor, Logan covered him with a pistol and forced him to unlock the door and take him to the basement of the jail. Then he forced the jailer to take him to the sheriff's stable and saddle the sheriff's horse. This done, Logan mounted and rode away in the direction of the mountains. A posse started in pursuit of the desperado within an hour, but they did not succeed in capturing him. A few months afterwards Logan was seen near Kaycee, in Wyoming, by a man who knew him well. He was on foot and was with another man. From Kaycee the men went to the Hole-in-the-Wall country. John May and Robert Tisdale were stopping at the McDonald ranch that night, and some time during the night one of Mr. McDonald's horses and a saddle were stolen, and John May's horse, saddle, chaps and six-shooter were stolen. Mr. McDonald sent a man to Kaycee who notified Deputy Sheriff Beard of the theft. Beard and Alva Young trailed the thieves up the Red Valley to Buffalo creek, and from there they followed the trail to Walt Putney's ranch, on Bridger creek, about forty miles southwest. When the officers came in sight of the Putney ranch, they saw two men riding over a hill to the west. The officers followed the men, and while they were riding down into a gulch they saw a man coming back afoot over the top of a hill. The officers dismounted and got into a small ravine. The man on the hill shot at the officers and the fire was returned. The battle continued until the man on the hill, who was Logan, was hit. It was then that Logan's companion came in sight with two horses. Logan was helped on his horse by the man and they made their escape into the hills.

Two nights after this fight occurred two men rode into Thermopolis at about nine o'clock. They were wearing masks when they called at Dr. Julius A. Schulke's office. They were heavily armed, but they informed the doctor that they would do him no harm if he would do as they said. They ordered him to gather such instruments and procure such medicine, bandages and other things necessary to treat a human being suffering from a serious gun-shot wound, and to do the things they ordered quietly and quickly. The doctor complied with the demands with dispatch. He was then blindfolded and led out to a buggy and assisted into it. The men then drove away with him, and they were on the road several hours, but the doctor did not know how far or in what direction he was from Thermopolis when the team stopped. He was assisted out of the vehicle and into a house, and was taken into a room where blankets were hung up around a bed so he could not recognize the room if he had ever been there before or if he ever came again. It was here that the blindfold was taken from

his eyes, and he saw a man of very dark complexion lying on the bed. The man had been shot through the groin with a soft-nosed rifle bullet, which was similar to the bullets used by Deputy Sheriff Beard. The wound was dressed and the physician left medicine and directions for the treatment of the patient. The doctor was then blindfolded again, and was taken from the house to the buggy and returned to his home in Thermopolis, arriving there just before daylight. He was given a liberal fee and was told to remember nothing that had transpired that night. A few nights later two men again appeared in the same manner and at about the same time as the previous visit. He received the same orders and was carried away in the same condition and to the same place as before, and he administered to the same wounded man, but the wound had become infected and the patient was delirious. The physician told the men that, in his opinion, death would result within a few days. The physician was then blindfolded and returned to Thermopolis as before and he was again given a liberal fee.<sup>1</sup> The doctor received no more calls of the same nature, and Harve Logan has not since been seen or heard from.

It is said by some that he did not die, but after he recovered he went away, with the declaration that he would never again steal a horse or a cow, that he was through with the train robbing business, and that he intended to settle down and live a quiet, peaceful life. The physician who treated him, however, was of the opinion that he died. The supposition is that the patient was Harve Logan and that he was shot by Deputy Sheriff Beard.

It is said of Logan that before he robbed the train in Montana, he killed the sheriff who had shot George Currie, and he had killed every man he imagined had ever done him an injury; that he always came back and got his man, and he had no more compunction about killing a man than he had in stealing a bunch of cattle or horses. That he never came back after the officer who shot him strengthens the hypothesis that he died. That the officer who shot him did the best job that was ever done in Wyoming there is no question.

### THE CURRIE GANG

The Currie gang operated in Wyoming, Montana, and South Dakota, from 1894 to 1900, stealing horses, robbing postoffices and trains and holding up stores and banks and committing murder upon the least provocation. The leaders were Harvey Logan, alias "Kid Curry," George Currie, alias "Flat Nose George," and Tom and

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Schulke, who died near DeRanch from an overdose of morphine in August, 1903, in a stage coach, while on his way from Thermopolis to Casper, told of this incident to one of his closest friends, who, after the doctor's death, felt at liberty to make it public.



George Dickson, alias Tom and George "Jones," alias the "Roberts Brothers." They were also at the head of the notorious Hole-in-the-Wall gang, and were noted as the most desperate of all the marauding bands who terrorized the district where they carried on their operations. People were in constant fear of them and property was in jeopardy.

Two members of this gang appeared at Wolton, an interior town sixty miles west from Casper, one evening about 9 o'clock early in June, 1898. Entering the store, they selected about sixty dollars' worth of goods. After the package had been wrapped, a third man came into the store with a handkerchief over his face and the three men drew their guns and ordered the manager of the store, R. L. Carpenter, and the clerk, Jay Harmon, to throw up their hands. While two of the men covered the manager and clerk with their guns, the third rifled the safe and robbed the postoffice. About \$300 in money and goods were taken. Carpenter and Harmon were then marched out to the corrals and were backed against the fence while the robbers prepared to leave. The bundles were tied on the horses and a buggy team belonging to H. B. Brower, the hotel proprietor, and Carpenter's saddle horse were stolen. Carpenter and Harmon were warned if they valued their lives, not to report the robbery for twenty-four hours. The outlaws then bade the men "good night," and rode away. The next day at noon the hold-up was reported and a posse was organized and followed the trail of the robbers southwest for twenty miles, where they found Carpenter's horse, but all trace of the men was lost. The gang was next heard from at Belle Fourche, South Dakota. After adding three more desperate characters to their party they held up the bank at that place on the 28th of June and secured nearly \$4,000 in cash.

At about 9 o'clock in the morning, the six men rode into town on horseback and went immediately to the bank. Upon entering, they covered the customers and employees of the bank with their guns and took all the money in sight. One of the thieves rushed out of the front door and the others went out the side door. They had six-shooters in each hand and fired in all directions. Then they deliberately tightened the cinches of their saddles and mounting, rode out of town. One of them was unable to mount his horse, which shied, broke away from him, and started after the others. He made a frantic effort to secure another horse and finally rushed around the crowd and attempted to cut the harness off a mule, which was hitched to a cart, but he was captured. He had in his possession \$392, and gave his name as Tom O'Day. The others were followed by a posse of fifty men, who overtook them at the Clay ranch, twelve miles from town. A gun fight



ensued in which some of the posse were hit by bullets and some of their horses were killed. Several hundred shots were fired, but the robbers escaped without being hurt. O'Day was taken to the jail at Deadwood, but made his escape after about two weeks. He was retaken, however, and at the trial, the state's attorney was unable to prove that he was one of the hold-up men and he was turned loose.

The Currie gang was again heard from on August 20, when they held up Postmaster Budd at Big Piney, Uinta county, and secured about \$300. They also made an attempt to rob the store and post-office at Granger, Wyoming, but were unsuccessful.

Government detectives and county sheriffs trailed the thieves up Green river and on to the headwaters of the Gros Ventres, and in a narrow defile of the mountains the sheriff's party was ambushed and fired upon by the fugitives and one of the posse was badly wounded. The surprise was so complete that the robbers succeeded in making their escape without even being shot at. The sheriff's men were carrying their guns with the stocks down and could not get them in action until the robbers had fled. Upon going to the spot where the attack was made, it was found that the shots were fired at a distance of only fifteen paces. The robbers were driven back into the rocks and were followed to a point on the Shoshone Indian reservation forty miles below Fort Washakie. There they disappeared and there was no trace of them for several days, but on September 9, they were seen crossing the Big Wind river thirty-five miles above Fort Washakie. On September 14, they crossed the Belle Fourche river near the Missouri Buttes and the Devil's Tower. By this time they had ridden more than 400 miles in five days. They covered one stretch of 150 miles in twenty-four hours, which conveys the wonderful endurance of the fugitives. The authorities were on their trail for more than six weeks and the chase led them through Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, and finally almost to the Canadian line, in the region of the Pecatts rapids. Here they were overtaken while they were in camp, wholly unaware of the proximity of the officers. They were all seated on the ground with their guns within easy reach and their horses were unsaddled. When the officers were seen, the men with the agility of cats jumped to their feet, seized their guns, and in a moment were mounted bareback and in full flight. As they retreated, both sides opened fire and many shots were exchanged, but no one was injured. The posse returned to the camp after the fugitives had made their escape and they found a fine assortment of saddles and fifteen head of horses, which had been stolen.

The fugitives returned to the Big Horn basin country about ten days later and took up their rendezvous in the country which is said

to be the most romantic in North America. The roads wind through beautiful natural pastures and deep, dark gullies, the district for 200 miles north and south and 100 east and west being a mighty basin, once the bed of an ancient lake. In the rugged mountains which border the basin are retreats with which the fugitives were perfectly familiar, and it was here the most skilled sheriffs and county officers of Wyoming and Montana were baffled, acknowledged defeat, and gave up the chase.

### RODE OUT OF TOWN ON A RAIL

On the 14th of September, 1901, when President William McKinley died from his wounds which were inflicted by a bullet fired by an anarchist, a man named Wagner, who had been in Casper but a few days, remarked that "he ought to have been shot a year ago." The fellow made the remark in one of the saloons in the evening, but nothing was done or said about it at the time. The next morning, however, about 9 o'clock when some of the business men of the town were told about it, eight prominent Casper men went to the saloon and took the fellow out and led him to the Nicolaysen lumber yard. He was then put on a 2 x 6 scantling, and with four men at each end of the piece of lumber, the fellow was carried to the railroad where he was unloaded and told to travel east, and not to look back. The fellow complied with the order and thus saved the citizens the trouble of giving him a coat of tar and feathers and probably a severe beating which he justly deserved. The men who put the fellow on the rail and carried him out of town were criticized by most of the people in the town—because they let the fellow off so easy.

### "DRIFTWOOD JIM" McCloud

"Driftwood Jim" McCloud, who shot Ben Minick, a sheep owner in the Black mountain district, east of Thermopolis, in 1902, and who robbed the Buffalo postoffice, blew a safe at Thermopolis and held up the Buffalo-Sheridan stage, all within a year's time, was arrested at Thermopolis in the summer of 1903 upon a charge of robbing the Buffalo postoffice. He was taken from Thermopolis to Cody in a wagon drawn by four horses and from Cody he was taken to Basin. "Driftwood Jim" and the driver occupied the front seat of the wagon and in the rear seat were two guards with rifles and revolvers, and surrounding the wagon were six men on horseback, all of whom were armed with revolvers. "Driftwood Jim" wore handcuffs on his wrists and shackles on his ankles. McCloud had been arrested many

times before, and had as many times made his escape from jail and the officers. The notorious Tom O'Day, with his gang, had planned to rescue Jim from the officers on this occasion, but when Tom and his men, who were hidden in the brush along the roadside about ten miles out from Thermopolis, saw the strength of the officers, they did not make the attempt to deliver their comrade and partner in crime. "Driftwood Jim" was taken from Basin to Cheyenne under an escort of six men. In Cheyenne he escaped from jail with Tom Horn, the killer, but both men were recaptured within half an hour after their escape. Horn was hanged in the Laramie county jail on November 20, 1903, and at the January, 1904, term of the federal court, "Driftwood Jim" pleaded guilty to robbing the Buffalo postoffice on the 27th of April, 1903, and was sentenced by Judge Riner to serve four years in the federal prison at Leavenworth. Before he came to Wyoming he robbed the postoffice at Topeka, Kansas, and was arrested upon the charge and was placed in the county jail to await trial, but he made his escape and came west. After having served his term in the federal prison for the robbery of the Buffalo postoffice he was re-arrested and taken to Topeka, where he was tried, found guilty and sentenced to serve two years in the prison from which he had just been released. After having been released from prison the second time he has not made his presence known in Wyoming. Like Tom O'Day, McCloud was a coward at heart, and always showed the "white feather" when in a tight place, but when he had the advantage of his victim he was a vicious brute and cared no more for human life than a decent man would care for the life of a coyote.

#### HORSE THIEF TOM O'DAY

Tom O'Day, the notorious horse thief and all 'round bad man, was captured at the break of day on the Big Horn mountains, 110 miles from Casper on Sunday, November 23, 1903, by Sheriff Frank K. Webb. At the time of his capture, O'Day had twenty-three head of horses in his possession which he was attempting to drive into Montana where he hoped to deliver them to some of his confederates. The sheriff and his prisoner arrived in Casper at 1:45 the following Tuesday afternoon, the trip being made on horseback, O'Day riding ahead and the sheriff and two deputies in the rear.

The sheriff trailed O'Day to a cabin on the mountains in the evening, but waited until morning before the attempt was made to take him. O'Day had gathered the bunch of horses in Converse and Natrona counties and had been driving them for a week before he was overtaken. When he came out of the cabin, the sheriff had the

drop on him and demanded that he throw up his hands. O'Day was taken by surprise, and at first hesitated to raise his hands, but the sheriff threatened to shoot him if he did not comply immediately. O'Day said, "Good God, Webb, don't kill me," and raised his hands in the air. He had on his person a .45 six-shooter and there was a .30-.30 rifle in the cabin which he carried on his saddle in the daytime while he was driving the horses out of the country.

The horses were taken to Lost Cabin where they were put in a corral, but during the night the animals were turned out and driven away by men who were supposed to be friends and in partnership with O'Day. Twenty-one of the horses were recovered in about a week and they were brought to Casper and in due time were turned over to their lawful owners.

O'Day's trial came up at the February, 1904, term of the district court. The first jury did not agree, there being six in favor of conviction and six for acquittal. This was not a great surprise to the law-abiding people, for it was the common talk that O'Day had too many friends in the country and that a conviction could not be reached, no matter how strong the proof of his guilt might be. Another jury was drawn and it also disagreed, there being eleven for conviction and one for acquittal. This gave the officers and the good people some encouragement. The third jury was drawn and the trial was again the center of attraction. Judge Craig was presiding. A verdict of guilty was soon reached by this jury after the testimony was adduced and the instructions of the court were given. The verdict seemed to be a great surprise for O'Day, and he displayed considerable temper toward the sheriff, the prosecuting attorney, the court, and the jury. Six years in the penitentiary was the sentence of the court, but before the sentence was pronounced, Judge Craig gave the convicted man a lecture. "In the early days of Wyoming," the court said, "it was the custom to rustle stock, and if a list could be compiled of all the men who had gotten a start in life by this method, it would make quite a large catalogue. But those days are past, and Tom, you ought to have quit when the rest of the boys did. If I were to sentence you for all the crimes you have committed, you would go to the penitentiary for the remainder of your life, but your sentence shall be only for the crime upon which you have been convicted.

"No man ever made himself rich by stealing; men will always be better off if they take only that which rightfully and lawfully belongs to them; men who are dishonest never have very much to leave to their widows and children. After you serve your sentence, try and lead an honest life; you will find that it pays; there is but one result for those who steal."

After the sentence, O'Day said to Sheriff Webb, "If I had a gun you would never put me in that jail again and I'm not in the pen yet. I want you to remember that." The sheriff told him that he was careful to see that he didn't have a gun, and therefore there would be no trouble in getting him back to jail, "and it won't be long until you are in the pen, I want you to remember that."

A few days after the sentence the sheriff put O'Day and two other men who were under sentence in the baggage car, where he was securely ironed. An attempt was made by O'Day's sister, who was in Casper from Omaha, to visit her brother in the car, but she as well as all others were denied that privilege.

He was landed safely in the penitentiary without trouble except at Wheatland where they were eating supper. O'Day attempted to get the sheriff's gun from its scabbard. Failing, he tried to pass it off as a joke. He served his sentence, making a model prisoner. After his release he went to Iowa, bought a small farm, followed Judge Craig's advice about being honest, at least as far as horse stealing was concerned, and became a prosperous, horny-handed son of the soil.

The three court trials cost the county \$2,684.05, and the expense of his capture was \$586.55, making a total of \$3,270.60, but it was money well spent, for it was the means of breaking up one of the worst gangs of horse thieves that ever operated in Central Wyoming.

#### OTTO CHENOWETH, THE GENTLEMAN HORSE THIEF, AND "STUTTERING DICK"

Otto Chenoweth was known as Central Wyoming's "Gentleman Horse Thief." He was a man of good appearance, well educated, a good conversationalist, and acceptable company anywhere. He came to Wyoming from the effete east in 1884 or '85 and worked for the 4 W cow outfit on the Cheyenne river. His purpose in coming out west from Worcester, Massachusetts, was to get ideas on painting western scenes—he was an artist of considerable ability. Instead of cultivating artistic ideas, he formed a friendship with Kid Anderson and Dad Young, two notorious thieves, and the three of them drifted to the Sundance country where they rustled cattle and stole horses until one day Chenoweth came face to face with Joe Elliott, a "killer" for the stock association. He knew Elliott and Elliott knew him and he knew what Elliott would do to him, but he made his getaway and went to Chadron, where he sold his horses.

He then went home to his mother, where he intended to remain and reform, but he could not shake off the western fever, and in the fall of 1892, he came to Casper. He went to work herding sheep for



Robert Parkhurst, and one stormy night in the spring of 1893, while camped about fifteen miles northeast of Casper, on the north side of the river, he heard his sheep commence to move. He arose from his bed and in his underclothing ran out to see if he could not stop them from drifting with the storm. The night was dark and the blinding snow storm soon caused him to lose the location of his camp.

Finally he started for Casper, and after traveling for hours and hours through the storm and over a rough country, he reached the Platte river bridge west from town, almost exhausted and nearly frozen. From here he had but a mile to walk, but in traveling that mile he fell numerous times and made part of the distance by crawling on his hands and knees. With a supreme effort he finally reached town, and after a few days recovered from his terrible experience. He did not return to work on the range, but went to work as a gambler, and followed this occupation off and on for about seven years. He finally went into the sheep-raising business with Nick Schreiner, but in the fall of 1900 was arrested upon the charge of stealing 150 head of sheep from Leslie Gantz. At the first trial the jury failed to agree and when his name was called for the second trial in July, 1901, he did not appear, and his bond of \$500 was forfeited.

He went to the Kaycee country where he and Richard Hale, alias "Stuttering Dick," alias "Black Dick," formed a partnership and went to Medora, South Dakota, where they stole a bunch of blooded horses belonging to the Little Missouri company. The horses were valued at \$10,000. While the thieves were driving the stock away, they came across a number of CY cow-boys whom they thought were officers and a running battle ensued. They abandoned their horses and made their escape, but the officers later took up their trail and followed them to Billings, Montana, where Chenoweth was captured, but Dick escaped. Chenoweth was taken to Medora and placed in jail and after two months had won the friendship and confidence of the sheriff to such extent that he was made a trusty, and one day while the sheriff was absent, he walked away. In due time he arrived in San Francisco, where he worked in a restaurant. Later he went to Seattle, then to Montana, and then returned to the Lost Cabin country. He made his headquarters at the Walt Putney ranch, where in a short time he was captured by Sheriff Webb. The sheriff brought him to Lost Cabin, arriving there at about 10 o'clock at night, where he intended to remain until morning and come to Casper the next day. While lunch was being prepared in the J. B. Okie residence for the sheriff and his prisoner, Chenoweth told the sheriff he was going into the kitchen for a drink of water, but instead of stopping in the kitchen he ran through to the parlor, where a dance



was in progress, and a great many ladies and gentlemen were present. The sheriff, with a drawn revolver ran after him, and naturally there was considerable of a commotion and excitement among the dancers. Chenoweth escaped into the open, with the sheriff in hot pursuit, and after firing half a dozen shots and running at top speed for a distance of at least three hundred yards, the officer finally recaptured the prisoner and brought him back to the house, where the two men had their lunch, after which Chenoweth sent apologies to the ladies in the parlor for so unceremoniously intruding upon their presence, and he also apologized for the rudeness of the sheriff in entering the parlor in such an ungentlemanly manner, and having a revolver in his hand. The next day he was brought to Casper and from here he was taken to Medora to stand trial upon the charge of horse stealing, but instead of being convicted of stealing horses, he was adjudged insane, and sent to the asylum at Jamestown, S. D. After a short time his mother came and got him and took him to his former home at Worcester, Massachusetts, promising to have him confined in a private sanitarium, until he recovered from his mental aberration and his desire to steal and rob.

"Stuttering" or "Black" Dick Hale was never captured, but he came into the limelight again by being classed as one of the Hole-in-the-Wall gang. He was charged as a cattle rustler, horse thief, and train robber, and rewards aggregating more than \$3,000 were offered for his apprehension. In November, 1901, the Johnson county authorities overtook him at Wolton and after a battle in which Dick's horse was shot and killed, he pretended that he was severely injured when the horse fell with him. He was taken to the Buck Camp ranch and put to bed in the bunk house with a sheep herder guarding him. During the night, Hale overpowered his guard, took his six-shooter and went to the ranch house where he held up the inmates and secured a rifle and a belt full of cartridges. He then went to the barn, saddled and bridled a horse, and rode away. A number of shots were fired after him and one bullet took effect, but he was not dangerously wounded. The next day, Hale was trailed a distance of thirty miles by spots of blood that fell from his wound, but he took to a stream and threw his pursuers off the trail. William Madden offered a reward of \$1,000 for his capture. Early in January, Dick was located in Routt county, Colorado, but he got wind of the officers' coming and fled to Utah. About the middle of February, he was located in the mountains near Thompsons, Utah, but he was warned by friends of the approach of the officers and again escaped and was never captured. The story that he had killed a number of men was not true. So far as known he never committed murder. He was desperate,

however, and would fight to the last ditch if cornered. He was a superb horseman, a crack shot with both rifle and pistol, and an expert in handling the lariat.

### TOM HORN, THE "KILLER"

Tom Horn made his living by killing people. He was hired under the guise of a detective by the Wyoming Stockgrowers' association, but his real business was to "dispose" of men who were "marked" by some of the members of the association. Although there is no record of anyone in Natrona county ever having been "disposed" of by him, it was known that he often came here and was seen during the evenings in the vicinity of the homes of ranchers whom the members of the association accused of using a long rope and a branding iron on cattle and calves that were picked up on the open range. The men who were "marked" were aware of it and whenever Horn came to the country, the "marked" men kept out of sight until the killer went away, and more than one man has slept in the brush while Horn lurked about.

Horn came to Wyoming in the early '90's from the Pinkerton Detective agency. Shortly after he commenced operations, two men, named Powell and Lewis, were shot and killed in the Iron mountain district. Horn did not deny being responsible for their deaths and he is said to have told publicly how Powell begged him to spare his life, and he joked about how he killed them. Numerous other men came to their deaths from bullets fired by this professional killer, and for a long time many business men, as well as the men on the range, and even some of the officers of the law, seemed to be afraid of him.

On July 18, 1901, he shot and killed Willie Nickell, a thirteen-year-old lad, in the vicinity of where Powell and Lewis were killed. A stone was placed under the dead boy's head, which was said to be the manner in which Horn always left his victims so that his employers would know that he was responsible for the deed. The boy's father, Kels P. Nickell, was marked as a rustler, and while Horn was lying in wait for the father, the boy came past and discovered him. Horn realized that he had been seen by the lad, and in order to prevent his informing his father, Horn deliberately killed him and then left the place with all possible haste. About ten days later, Kels Nickell, while working in his garden, was shot at twice from ambush, both shots taking effect, one in the arm and the other in the hip.

The crime of killing an innocent boy was so dastardly that the whole state became aroused and demanded that the guilty party be apprehended and punished. Deputy United States Marshal Joe

LaFors, who was also a detective for the stockmen, but who, it may be said to his credit, never stooped to cold-blooded murder, was reasonably sure that Horn committed the crime. On January 10, 1902, he obtained a confession from Horn, while Horn was intoxicated, that he had killed the boy, remarking that it was the "best and dirtiest shot I ever made." LaFors had made arrangements for Horn to come to his room, and had concealed two expert stenographers in an adjoining room who heard everything that was said and took it down in shorthand. Horn told of the many killings that he had made and among the rest, he described how he killed the Nickell boy. A few days after he made the confession, while standing in the lobby of the Inter Ocean hotel at Cheyenne, he was arrested by Sheriff Smalley of Laramie county. Every precaution had been made by the sheriff to kill Horn if he attempted to resist, but when he was placed under arrest he merely treated it as a joke, unaware that he had been tricked by LaFors into making the confession and relying upon the strong organization back of him to prevent his conviction. At the October term of court his trial was had. Walter R. Stoll, one of the best criminal lawyers in the west, prosecuted the case. Horn was represented by able counsel, but on October 24, the jury returned a verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree against the defendant, and he was sentenced to be hanged in January, 1903, but a stay of execution was granted by the supreme court. In the meantime, Horn's friends left nothing undone to effect his escape, even to making arrangements to blow up the county jail where he was confined.

On August 6, Horn and "Driftwood Jim" McCloud did escape from the jail by their overpowering the jailer, taking away his keys, and arming themselves with two automatic revolvers which were in the jailer's possession. The men did not know how to use the automatics, however, for that kind of firearm had come into use after they had been incarcerated. They were recaptured within half an hour after they were on the streets and after that every precaution was taken to avoid another jail delivery.

The time set for Horn's hanging was November 20, 1903, and several days before the execution, members of the state militia were put on duty around the jail and no one was allowed to pass the guard without having an official permit. On the day of the hanging, the streets in the vicinity of the jail were crowded with people, but they were kept away from the jail by the militia. Horn mounted the gallows without a tremor and remarked, "A man must die some time, and it may as well be one time as another." After a brief ceremony, the trap was sprung and Horn shot down through the opening and the ignominious death that he so justly deserved was meted out to him,

and his soul went staggering into the lowest and darkest depths of hell, there to suffer for evermore the torments of perdition.

### THE TROUT-BIGGS KIDNAPING CASE

At the February, 1904, term of the district court in Natrona county, Anna E. Trout and her daughter, Viola Biggs, were convicted of kidnaping the three weeks' old baby boy of William J. Biggs and Viola Biggs, and Mrs. Trout was sentenced to serve eighteen months in the penitentiary at Rawlins and Viola Biggs was sentenced to serve twelve months. William Biggs and his wife, Viola, separated before their child was born and the young wife lived with her father and mother. After the child was born, the young mother claimed that she could not support it and she asked her mother to take it away and have it placed in an orphans' home. Mrs. Trout took the child to Denver and attempted to have it placed in an orphans' home, but she refused to answer the necessary questions before the child was taken in and the infant was refused admission. Mrs. Trout then took the baby to the Union depot, pinned a note on the little one's clothing, giving its name and date of birth and left it in a seat in the waiting room. The depot matron found the child and took it to the police station and from there it was taken to the orphanage, where it was recognized. Subsequently, it was brought back to Casper, and the mother and grandmother were arrested, tried, and convicted.

The two women served about six months of their sentence in the penitentiary when they were released by the supreme court upon some technicality in the proceedings of the court. These were the only women at that time who had ever been sentenced to the penitentiary from Natrona county, and it was a most pitiful sight to look upon the young woman twenty years of age and her mother about fifty years of age, taken to the state's prison, especially when the grandmother was leaving two daughters, one eight years of age and the other fourteen years of age, to have the finger of disgrace pointed at them from every direction.

Other women in Casper, who have committed the most cold-blooded murders, have been given their liberty in recent years and by some people have been lauded for the part they played.

### LINCOLN MORRISON SHOT

Lincoln Morrison, a Casper boy, was shot on Saturday night, May 29, 1904, while herding a band of sheep on Alkali gulch, on

Kirby creek, in Big Horn county, about fourteen miles from De-Ranch and twenty miles from Thermopolis. The bullet entered the boy's stomach and passed through his body in an oblique direction. A reward of \$2,500 was offered for the arrest and conviction of the party who did the shooting; \$1,000 was offered for a chain of evidence that would lead to the conviction of the person who did the shooting; \$500 was offered for corroborative evidence sworn to and used on behalf of the state in the trial of the guilty party, and \$1,000 was offered for the dead body of the party who did the shooting. Morrison recovered from his wounds, but the guilty party was never apprehended.

#### DEPUTY SHERIFF ED LEE, ET AL, STEAL HORSES

Lee Clubb, alias Ed Lee, George Jones and Dave Meckley, alias J. Z. Clark, the first two acting as deputy sheriffs of Natrona county, did a thriving business in horse stealing during the early months of 1905. Jones and Meckley would go out on the range and round up a bunch of horses, and then Lee would join them and the three men would change the brands. After a few days the horses were brought to Casper, and Lee, as deputy sheriff, would inspect them according to law, before they were shipped. He would turn a copy of the inspection certificate in to the railroad agent but no record of the inspection or the shipment was made in the sheriff's office. Sheriff Frank K. Webb became suspicious that there was something crooked, and in March, 1905, made a trip to Omaha, Saint Joe, East Saint Louis and other markets, where he found a number of horses that had been shipped by different parties, all of which had been inspected by Lee, but upon which no returns had been made in the sheriff's office. From East Saint Louis, Sheriff Webb sent a telegram to the prosecuting attorney of Natrona county apprising him of the thefts and ordering Lee's arrest. Lee's arrest created considerable surprise, for he apparently was a trust-worthy officer and a model young man, and he had many friends who were firm in their belief that it was all a mistake, but he was lodged in jail. At the preliminary trial Jones turned state's evidence and Lee was bound over to the district court for trial without bond, upon the charge of stealing horses, returning false brands upon horses that he had inspected and accepting bribes. By this time it had been learned that Lee and Meckley had been convicted of stealing cattle in Colorado and that Meckley had served a term in the penitentiary and that Lee, who, at the time of his conviction, was less than twenty-one years of age, had served time in the reform school.

On Friday, May 13, 1905, which proved to be a lucky day for Lee, at 5 o'clock in the evening, as the deputy sheriff unlocked the



cage door to hand in some food for the prisoners, he was overpowered by Lee, Martin Trout and a man named Wardlow. The deputy's keys and a gun were taken from him, and he was locked in a cell. The three men then went to the residence portion of the jail where they overpowered Mrs. Webb, wife of the sheriff, and locked her in the cell with the deputy. They told the deputy and Mrs. Webb that they would leave the keys where they could be easily found and when the sheriff returned he would have no trouble in finding them, and that they would be locked in the cell only a few hours. The three men then bade the deputy sheriff and Mrs. Webb good-bye and departed. Wardlow was soon captured, but Lee and Trout could not be found. A reward of \$1,000 was offered for Lee's capture, but no trace of him could be found. In February, 1906, Sheriff Webb made a trip to old Mexico, where he was informed that Lee was located. The sheriff was absent six weeks, but returned without his man. He said, however, that for several weeks he was hot on the trail of Lee, but the fugitive always kept a few days ahead of him. Hope of capturing the prisoner was practically abandoned, and in a few years the charges against him were stricken from the docket of the district court, but in February, 1910, it was learned that Lee was in Rock Springs, and ex-Sheriff Webb went there, arrested him and brought him to Casper, but when the ex-sheriff attempted to have him confined in the county jail, the sheriff would not accept him as a prisoner, and the prosecuting attorney said that inasmuch as all the charges against him had been stricken from the court docket he would not file an information against him or reinstate the cases on the docket until he was assured that competent witnesses could be secured to appear and testify against him. The witnesses were not secured and Lee was given his liberty, told to go his way and sin no more. He remained in the city several days and then left for Rock Springs where he had a wife and had established for himself a comfortable home. He said that when he escaped from the Natrona county jail in May, 1905, he went in a southwesterly direction, to the CY pasture, where he laid down in a ditch until dusk, and then he started to walk toward the Laramie Plains and after three days and nights of traveling he arrived in Carbon county where he herded sheep for nearly two years; then he took charge of a saloon at Wamsutter for a year; then he went to Rock Springs and was in charge of a saloon for a year, then moved to Great Falls, Montana, and remained there for a few months. While at Rock Springs he was married. He claimed that the two men, Jones and Meckley, "double-crossed" him while he was deputy sheriff, and that he was always honest with his horse inspections. His statement about being "double-crossed" and being honest with his horse



inspections was doubted by everybody who knew anything about the case, but it was then immaterial, and the taxpayers and stockmen of the county were satisfied to let him go and prayed that he would never return.

### FRANK DAVIS, ALIAS "BLACK MIKE"

Frank Davis, alias "Black Mike Smith," sneak thief, horse thief, check forger, and postoffice robber, on May 11, 1905, attempted to pass a forged check in the Wolton saloon, which caused trouble and in order to make his escape he pulled his six-shooter and shot promiscuously into the crowd. One bullet went through Pete Nutson's hat and furrowed the top of his scalp. Manuel Armenta and Oscar Hoback, deputy sheriffs, then attempted to place Davis under arrest, and the fellow shot off Hoback's thumb. Four shots were fired at the deputy sheriffs and Davis made his escape from the saloon. He ran to a cabin about 300 yards distant where he secured a rifle and fired several shots into the crowd of men. He then made a run for the hills, and after going about 200 yards dropped into a small ravine. He was surrounded by about twenty men, but he held them at bay by shooting at them, and although several of the men were hit, the remainder stood guard for several hours until Joe Marquis, Jack Peterson, and Manuel Armenta had filled a cart with bales of hay and bedding, and pushed it ahead of them to where the desperado was hidden in the ditch. Davis shot into the cart numerous times, but the men behind it were perfectly safe and proceeded on their way until they were within a distance of fifty yards of him. Davis then surrendered and was brought to Casper. He pleaded guilty to shooting at Nutson with the intent to commit murder and was sentenced by Judge Charles E. Carpenter to serve three years in the penitentiary. Davis had a number of forged checks on his person at the time he was arrested, and he was identified as the man who two months previous to his Wolton escapade held up the saloon at Lost Cabin and secured \$200. He was also accused of being connected with the hold-up of the Cody bank where Cashier Middaugh was shot and killed. At the time these crimes were committed, there was no railroad west from Casper and the interior towns were easily robbed. After serving his sentence in the penitentiary, Davis went to Colorado and has not since made his appearance in Wyoming.

### COUNTRY POSTOFFICE ROBBERS

John Williston, a burglar, who had served two years in the Montana penitentiary, and Frank Connors, a horse thief, who had

escaped from the Oregon penitentiary, robbed the postoffices at Moneta and Powder River on March 12 and 13, 1913, and on the morning of the 14th they were captured by Henry A. Johnson near the Johnson ranch, and brought to Casper. They were turned over to the federal authorities and taken to Cheyenne where they pleaded guilty to robbing a United States postoffice and each was sentenced to serve five years in the penitentiary. Their criminal career in Wyoming was short, but they were desperate characters who were capable and inclined to establish for themselves a record that would compare with Tom O'Day, Jim McCloud and many other horse thieves and postoffice robbers, had they not been apprehended so soon.

### GEORGE W. PIKE

George W. Pike was a horse thief, who operated in Central Wyoming for many years, but never served a term in the penitentiary, and died a natural death, and the people who knew him said he was lucky. His headquarters were in Converse county, but occasionally, when his business required it, came into Natrona county to pick up some loose stock. He committed perjury in the Tom O'Day trial in Casper in 1904 and a warrant was issued for his arrest, but he was never apprehended. When he died in 1908 he was given a decent burial in the Douglas cemetery, and a monument was erected over his grave by Lee Moore, a cattleman, with this inscription:

### GEORGE W. PIKE

Under this stone in eternal rest  
Sleeps the wildest one of the wayward West;  
He was a gambler, sport and cowboy, too,  
And he led the pace in an outlaw crew,  
He was sure on the trigger, and stayed to the end,  
But he was never known to quit a friend.  
In the relation of death all mankind is alike,  
But in life there was only one George W. Pike.

### TIED ON THE RAILROAD TRACKS

At about 10 o'clock on the night of November 11, 1911, two masked men bound Adolph Kuhrtz, the fireman and watchman at the Midwest Oil company's refinery plant, and, after chloroforming him, dragged him to the Wyoming & Northwestern railway tracks, a distance of several hundred yards, where they bound him to the rails, his head being bound to one of the rails and his feet to the opposite rail. His hands were tied behind his back with a piece of rope. The man was unconscious for some time, but when he regained con-

sciousness he worked his hands loose from the rope, but by this time they were so numb from the cold that he could not free himself from the track. Horace Evans, who was to relieve Kuhrtz at midnight, found the water low in the boiler when he appeared for duty and suspected that an accident had occurred and immediately made a search for the man, but it was half an hour before he found him. Evans released the half-unconscious and almost frozen man and helped him back to the plant, and from there he was taken to the hospital where it was found that both hands and both feet had been frozen. The motive for the crime was never solved and the men who committed the act were never caught. A reward of \$1,000 was offered for their apprehension and detectives worked on the case several months, but finally gave it up as a mystery.

### WOULD BLOW UP THE REFINERY

L. A. Reed, superintendent of the Midwest Refining company, received a letter on November 18, 1915, which threatened to blow up the refining plant unless he provided the writer of the letter with \$5,000. The letter was as follows:

"Mr. Reed, Sir: We wish to inform you that for the last six weeks we have laid about 600 pounds of dynamite under tanks, stills and boiler houses with the intention of blowing the Midwest straight into hell. Do you get that? Now, Reed, you gave us a damn dirty deal a while back, and it is up to you to make good or we will set off that dynamite as sure as there is a gray hair in your head. We have pledged our lives to put this thing through, and we will if we burn the entire town of Casper. There is a concrete bridge on the road that leads out east of town, the first bridge after you get past the brewery going east. Come to that bridge between 6:20 and 7 o'clock Saturday, the 20th, with \$5,000 in bills or gold. Drive on the bridge and drop it over the upper side. Come alone, and be damn sure that you are alone. If you bring anybody with you or drop anything over that isn't money, or try in any way to stop this deal, we will touch off the dynamite. There is not men enough in the state of Wyoming to stop us from this stunt. One shot at the bridge and we will blow the Midwest to hell.

"A B C D E F."

"Put this money down as we say and we will remove the dynamite. Fail and we will blow up the Midwest as sure as there is a God in heaven."

Suspicion pointed toward W. L. Frank as being the author of the communication. He had been working at the Midwest plant but was discharged. He was arrested on Sunday, the 21st. Paper similar to that on which the note was written was found in a valise belonging to him, and upon other evidence produced he was held to the district court for trial under bond of \$1,000. At the January term of the district court he was tried, found guilty and sentenced to serve a term of from three to four years in the penitentiary. He made a model prisoner, and after his term expired returned to Casper and has been a peaceable, quiet, law-abiding citizen.

## BILL CARLISLE, THE TRAIN ROBBER

William Carlisle's career showed a flash of the old time "bad man" days. He was a tall, red-headed, loose-jointed fellow, who first came into prominence when he was about twenty-seven years old. His first known banditry was perpetrated on February 9, 1916, when he held up a Union Pacific passenger train west of Rock Springs. With a six-shooter in each hand, he covered the brakeman and forced him to collect money from the passengers, then jumped from the moving train with his loot and disappeared. Train robbing is a capital offense in Wyoming and the crime drew nation-wide interest. A reward of \$1,000 was offered for his capture by the railroad company, but without result.

A few weeks later, the railroad company received a note from the fugitive warning them that before long he would commit another robbery on one of their trains in Wyoming. Although the letter was not taken in absolute seriousness, armed detectives were placed on all the trains in the state and the search for Carlisle was renewed. On the night of April 4, 1916, Carlisle climbed onto the observation platform of the Overland Limited as it was leaving the Cheyenne yards and after holding up a guard employed to protect the train against him, Carlisle robbed the male passengers of about \$600 in money and jewelry. The women were gallantly undisturbed. As the train was pulling into Corlett Junction, seven miles west of Cheyenne, the robber dropped from the observation platform and escaped into the darkness. Frantic efforts to capture him were made. All the trains that had passed that point on the line that night and the next day were searched. It did not occur to the searchers that their quarry might attempt to escape by walking, but that is what he did. He walked directly north from the railroad, obtaining food and shelter at ranches and homesteaders' places. He arrived in Casper April 10, and while here bought for himself a suit of clothes and some other wearing apparel. From Casper he went to Denver, where, it was said, he lived in the most extreme luxury for a short time, but he was smart enough to avoid suspicion of being the train robber.

Before going into the train robbing business Carlisle was a freighter in the Sussex and Kaycee country for about a year, and on account of his good nature and good behavior, was well known and well liked. He was known there as "Paddle Foot," the nickname having been given him owing to the extraordinary size of his feet.

His love for adventure and notoriety did not permit him to remain in obscurity long and in a short time he again wrote the officials of the Union Pacific of his intention to commit a train rob-

bery on one of their trains in Wyoming. As evidence of his identity, he enclosed a watch taken from one of his victims on the Overland Limited. The railroad officials were thoroughly aroused this time and droves of heavily armed detectives were on guard from Pine Bluffs to Evanston.

A sick man boarded a train at Greeley, Colorado, on the afternoon of April 21, 1916, and took a berth in a Pullman which was switched onto train number 21 at Cheyenne. The man's suffering seemed so great that it gained for him the sympathy of his fellow passengers. He recovered, however, entirely and quickly as the train was leaving Hanna, 140 miles west of Cheyenne. He was Carlisle. He held up the guard, fired one shot to convince the conductor that he was in earnest and then took \$400 from the men passengers and leaped from the train as it neared Edson tunnel. The railroad company and the sheriff of Carbon county rushed searchers to the scene immediately. A special train bearing horses and a posse armed to the teeth was run out from Cheyenne. The Union Pacific announced a reward of \$5,000 and the state offered \$500 for the capture of the outlaw. Hundreds of men turned out to look for Carlisle. It is said that there were so many men on the hunt that they were in constant danger of shooting one another. Late in the afternoon on the day after the robbery, Carlisle was captured about thirty miles north of the railroad. On the 10th of May, he was found guilty of train robbery and sentenced to life imprisonment in the state's prison. There were so many claims for the \$5,500 reward that the matter was finally settled in court.

For three years and five months, Carlisle served time in the Rawlins penitentiary. He was a good prisoner and never broke a rule. His life term was commuted on September 8, 1919, to from 25 to 50 years' imprisonment and this seemed to please him greatly and cause him to be more content with his fate.

On Saturday, November 15, 1919, Carlisle did not respond to roll call at supper time. An alarm was sounded and a search of the prison was made. It was subsequently discovered that Carlisle had escaped by concealing himself—with the aid of two fellow prisoners—in a box of shirts sent out from the prison factory that afternoon. A saw had been smuggled in to him a few days before, and after the box had been deposited in the railroad freight house and the freight agent had gone home for the night, Carlisle effected his freedom. Boarding a freight train, he traveled west fifteen miles to Creston, where he was forced to leave the train on account of the bitter cold. Bloodhounds were taken out and a large posse took up the search, but no trace of the fugitive was found until Tuesday night when he boldly



boarded and robbed the Union Pacific Los Angeles limited, number 19, between Rock River and Medicine Bow, ninety-five miles west of Cheyenne. As was his custom, after robbing the passengers, he dropped from the moving train into the darkness. Just before he left the train, some one fired a shot at him, the bullet striking his hand. This injury proved to be his undoing, but not before he had stirred up the entire country and aroused the citizens to a high pitch. One feature of the man hunt, one that infuriated the railroad officials, was the apparent sympathy of the general public for the criminal. The entire state was searched and researched. Rumors of Carlisle's appearance in widely separated cities confused the authorities and made the pursuit more difficult. A man who looked like Carlisle, entered a Casper newspaper office and gave the excited reporter an interview and then filed a message at the telegraph office addressed to the Union Pacific at Cheyenne, which read, "Thanks for haul on your limited. Some detective force. Carlisle." These incidents occupied the detectives for several days. Then messages and letters purporting to be from Carlisle, began pouring in to the civil and railroad authorities. They were written in every tone from ridicule to pleading.

In the meantime the fugitive had been innocent of all the letter writing. He had gone to the Laramie Peak country south of Douglas and was being sheltered from day to day by the residents of that section. Sheriff Roach of Converse county was trailing him and Carlisle was going as fast as he could to keep ahead of him. The bullet was still in his hand and he was suffering intense pain so that his pace became slower and slower. The posse overtook him once at a ranch house, but he escaped through a window. A heavy snowstorm covered his tracks and the posse did not find him again until the next day when they discovered him at the Williams ranch house in the wildest part of the region. The sheriff commanded him to throw up his hands, which he did. A paroxysm of pain in his wounded hand caused him to lower it and, at this, the sheriff shot Carlisle through the lung. He was taken to the Douglas hospital where he remained until his wounds healed sufficiently to permit his removal to the state's prison.

Since being returned to the penitentiary, he has made a model prisoner, as he did before his escape. During his spare time he manufactures many novelties and places them on sale at different towns throughout the state at the holiday season. With the proceeds from the sale of these, he purchases law books. He is studying law and hopes to become an attorney if he lives out his sentence or is paroled.



## MEXICAN SHOPLIFTER ATTEMPTS MURDER

A. J. Cunningham, president of the Casper National bank and the Richards & Cunningham store, was shot in the left arm, near the shoulder, and A. E. Biglin was shot through the fleshy part of his left leg, above the knee, on February 24, 1922, by a Mexican named John Cisenaros. The Mexican had stolen two pairs of shoes from the Cunningham store and Mr. Cunningham apprehended him and was about to call the sheriff when the shooting commenced. The first shot took effect in Mr. Cunningham's arm, and two other shots were fired without hitting any one, and it was the fourth shot which took effect on Mr. Biglin. Mr. Cunningham was confined to his home for three months and Mr. Biglin was out within a week. The Mexican pleaded guilty in the district court to shooting with intent to kill and was sentenced to thirteen years and six months in the penitentiary.

The city and county authorities and a committee of citizens on the 28th of the month rounded up about two dozen Mexicans and negroes who had no visible means of support, loaded them in a box car and they started north, and they were given to understand that they would not be protected by the law should a citizens' vigilance committee decide to operate upon them. They seemed as anxious to leave as the people were to have them go, and it is not likely they will ever return.

# Tragedies on the Range

## CATTLEMEN'S INVASION OF JOHNSON COUNTY

CATTLE rustling seemed to be a popular and profitable pastime for a great many people in Wyoming in the '80's and early '90's but to this, like all things else, an end had to come, and many of the men who did not quit when the business lost its popularity paid dearly for their folly. Many a nester started into the cattle business with but little more than a cow pony, a rope, a round-up bed, a running iron, and, of necessity, a lack of conscience. After a few years, if he were cautious, he had a nice little herd of cattle with a brand of his own. To put a brand on a maverick<sup>1</sup> in those days was considered not exactly cattle stealing. The man who applied the iron would merely say to himself that if he had not done it, someone else would, and this left his conscience clear, for he knew he was telling himself the truth. But unbranded strays on the open range were not numerous after the first few years the nester commenced to operate, for there were too many people engaged in the branding business. Then, in order to increase their herds there were some who would shoot the mothers and drive the calves away, and there were others who would blotch the brand on a steer and drive it out of its range.

But the nester was not the only one accused of swinging the long rope and operating the branding iron. Some of the big cattle outfits were accused not only of branding mavericks which no doubt did not belong to them, but other dishonest practices were attributed to them. It is said that when the Frewen brothers came from England in the early '80's and located on the North and Middle forks of Powder river, they negotiated with the 76 outfit on the Sweetwater for 3,500

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Maverick was owner of a large number of cattle in Southern Texas in the early '40's, whose ambition was to be able to travel from San Antonio to El Paso and from El Paso to the mouth of the Rio Grande on his own land. He secured title to more than two million acres of land, but his desire to travel on his own land from the points named was never realized. Maverick had a debt against a stockman which he was unable to collect in money, and he took 400 head of cattle at \$3 per head and cancelled the debt. At the end of four years he sold these cattle at \$6 per head, including the natural increase, upon which he had never placed his brand, and consequently there were on the range a large number of unbranded cattle, and when the cowboys and stockmen came across a bunch of unbranded cattle they would remark they "belonged to Maverick," or "they were Maverick's." This is how the term maverick originated and was applied to unbranded cattle by the stockmen and cowboys, and is in common use nowadays.

head of cattle, book count, for which they were to pay \$75,000. The Frewens wanted to see the cattle and also to make a rough tally of them, and accordingly, they started up Horse creek with the 76 representatives, where they located cattle all the way to the foot of Rattlesnake canyon. Then they crossed over to the head of Fish creek, which stream they followed for a considerable distance and there were 76 cattle all the way down Fish creek. But the cow punchers had made a short cut from Horse creek to Fish creek, pushing the cattle ahead of them and arriving at Fish creek ahead of the Frewens, who had gone the longer route. The Frewens counted these cattle—the same cattle they had counted on Horse creek, but they did not recognize them—and they found in the neighborhood of 3,500, but there were actually only 2,200. The Frewens were satisfied with the count and the money was paid over to the 76 outfit and the brand and the stock were afterwards owned by the Frewens. A man named Foley was agent for and a member of the 76 outfit and he was responsible for the short cut from Horse creek to Fish creek made by the cow punchers and the cattle. When the Frewens made their fall round-up and found they were short about 1,300 cattle, they were of the opinion that their shortage was caused by cattle rustlers, but some of the cowboys explained the “joke” to them. The Frewens accepted the matter like good sports, but they did not remain long in the cattle business, for they displayed no more business judgment in other things than they did when they thought they were buying 3,500 head of cattle and got but 2,200. Their experience in the cattle business in Wyoming is said to have cost them half a million dollars.

The cattlemen did not seriously object to having a few of their mavericks branded by a man who was ambitious and wanted to get a start. In fact, many of the large cattle outfits applied their brands on calves and sometimes on two-year-olds when they had serious doubts as to whether the stock rightfully belonged to them. But when the practices of blotching the brands on steers and shooting the mothers of calves were started, the cattlemen realized the time had come when the rustling of cattle must come to an end. The courts could not, or would not, stop it. Large rewards were offered for the arrest and conviction of cattle thieves; livestock detectives were brought into the state to gather evidence against the rustler; many arrests were made, and although there appeared to be an abundance of evidence to convict, yet rustler after rustler was turned loose and the courts were considered a joke and a farce.

After all lawful means of protecting their property seemed to have failed, the cattlemen commenced to make laws of their own and

to mete out punishment that in their minds seemed adequate to the crimes committed, and a number of men who were said to have been rustlers were shot, but even this did not seem to have the effect of suppressing the business of cattle stealing.

Then the cattlemen formed an organization known as the "Regulators." They imported gunmen from Texas, Idaho, Colorado, and other states. These men were to receive five dollars a day and expenses, and they were to go where they were commanded and do the things they were told. For a number of weeks plans and preparations were made by the Regulators to invade the cattle country and strike a blow that would terrorize the rustlers and cause those who were not killed to flee for their lives.

The KC ranch, in Johnson county, was selected as the first scene of action, and in writing an account of the battle that occurred there, we shall give the unvarnished facts without bias or prejudice. In dealing with the incidents, the cattlemen shall be termed the "regulators" and those whom they sought to punish shall be termed the "settlers."

On the 4th and 5th of April, 1892, definite plans were perfected by the regulators to leave Cheyenne and invade the cattle country and on the evening of the 5th a special train arrived in Cheyenne from Denver bearing the gunmen who had been hired as "detectives." This train was taken to the Cheyenne stockyards where three stock cars had been loaded with wagons, horses, harness, tents, ammunition, and provisions sufficient to carry the party through a ten days' expedition. The stock cars were attached to the special train of three passenger coaches and at 6 o'clock the start was made for Casper.

The train arrived at the stockyards a mile east of Casper at 4:20 in the morning, April 6. The paraphernalia was immediately taken from the cars and at about 5:30 three new wagons, with four horses to each wagon, passed through town. Two of these wagons were loaded with provisions and the other contained bedding and ammunition. The men of the party who were not connected with the wagons, crossed the river on horseback about three miles east of town and joined the wagon party on Casper creek, a few miles northwest. All the mounted men were armed with Winchester rifles and Colt's revolvers. Major Wolcott was in command; F. M. Canton was captain of the Wyoming men and Tom Smith was captain of the gunmen who were brought in from the other states. There were fifty-two men in the party. Friends of the regulators in Douglas and Casper had been instructed to give out the information that the men were surveyors on their way to the Bald mountains.

On their way to Johnson county the regulators met a number of men on the road coming toward Casper whom they compelled to turn back and travel with them for hours or forced them to go through with the expedition. About four miles from Casper, on Casper creek, the party overtook Oscar Lehman and Bert Lambert, who were looking after a band of sheep. Lehman, who had been married but a short time, was ordered to fall in the front ranks and Lambert in the rear. Lehman made such a strong plea to be released that his request was granted upon his promising that he would go directly to his wife, who was in a sheep wagon several miles back. Word was passed to the rear that the two men were to be set free. Upon their release, both men headed toward the sheep wagon, but neither knew that his friend was also to be given his liberty. When Lambert, upon looking back, saw a horseman coming toward him he imagined it was one of the regulators who was urging him to go faster. Lehman thought the man ahead of him was one of the regulators who had broken ranks and was going to the sheep wagon to inform his bride that he was being taken away and he naturally gave chase. When the two men were near the wagon, they recognized each other and their fright was turned to joy.

Later in the day the regulators met J. C. (Dad) Renfro and a man named McGhee, whom they forced to accompany the expedition to Tisdale's ranch where they were detained for two days. One night while they pretended they were asleep, they overheard the plans of the leaders and they recognized the names of more than forty men who were "marked" as rustlers and who were to be shot. Eleven of the men mentioned lived in Natrona county, twenty-two in Converse county and the balance were from Johnson county. After the second day Renfro and McGhee were released, and they started immediately for Casper. Upon their arrival here, however, they refused to disclose any news or details of the happenings while they were held by the regulators, as they had been warned to keep silent or suffer death.

Just before reaching the Tisdale ranch the advancing force was met by Mike Shonsy, foreman for the Western Union Beef company. He informed them that there were rustlers at Nolan's KC ranch. Upon receipt of this information, the regulators decided to camp at Tisdale's until their supply wagons had time to catch up with them. Friday, the 8th of April, was spent at the Tisdale ranch. In the afternoon, Shonsy was sent out in charge of a squad to reconnoiter. After dark they resumed their journey and before daylight arrived at the KC ranch. They surrounded the buildings and concealed themselves in the stable, along the creek, and in the brush along the ravine and



awaited orders. Shortly after daylight, William W. Walker, a trapper who had spent the night at the ranch, came out of the house with a bucket and walked toward the creek. He was taken prisoner. Ben Jones, another trapper, then came out of the house and walked toward the stable. He too was taken prisoner. Nick Ray was the next to come out of the house and he had walked but a few steps when he was shot in the head and fell in his tracks. Nate Champion then came to the door and fired a number of shots at the besiegers and they returned the fire hotly. He closed the door and from a window watched Ray slowly crawl toward the house. When Ray had almost reached the doorstep, Champion opened the door, sent another volley of shots toward the stable and creek and then stepped out and dragged Ray into the house while a hail of shot was sent toward him.

Champion evidently realized that his chances of escape were hazardous, for he wrote down in a notebook the progress of the battle so that his friends could be informed of the details in case of his death. Ray died at 9 o'clock in the morning. Champion would not give up, but fired at the besiegers occasionally. At 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon "Black Jack" Flagg and his stepson came by and they were shot at by the regulators. Flagg's account of the attack on him was as follows:

"The morning of the 9th I started from my ranch, eighteen miles above the river, to go to Douglas. I was on horseback, and my stepson, a boy 17 years of age, started with me to go to the Powder river crossing. He was driving two horses and had only the running gear of a  $3\frac{1}{4}$  wagon. We got to the KC ranch about 2:30. I was riding about fifty yards behind the wagon. We could not see the stable, behind which the murderers were concealed, until we were within seventy-five yards of it. When the wagon hove in sight the murderers jumped up and commanded the boy to halt, but he urged up his horses and drove for the bridge. When they saw he would not stop, one of them took aim on the corner of the fence and fired at him. The shot missed him and scared his team, which stampeded across the bridge and on up the road.

"There were twenty men behind the stable, and seven came up on horseback, three from one side of the road and four from the other, and closed in behind me. When the men behind the stable saw me, they began to jump for their guns, which were leaning against the fence, and called on me to stop and throw up my hands. I did not comply with their order, but kept straight for the bridge. When I got to the nearest point to them—forty-seven steps—a man whom I recognized as Ford, stepped from the crowd and, taking deliberate aim at me with his Winchester, fired. Then they all commenced firing. I threw myself on the side of my horse and made a run for it. The seven horsemen followed me. When I overtook my wagon, which had my rifle in it, I told my boy to hand it to me, which he did; I then told him to stop and cut one of the horses loose and mount him. The seven horsemen were following me, and when I stopped, were 350 yards behind, but as soon as they saw I had a rifle, they stopped. I only had three cartridges for my rifle, and did not want to fire one of them, unless they came closer, which they did not seem inclined to do."

After Flagg's escape, the regulators brought back the wagon he had left and loading it with hay and some pitch pine, wheeled it against the house and set it on fire. This was about 4 o'clock. The house was soon in flames and Champion was forced out. When he



ran from the building, he was in his stocking feet and hatless. He had a rifle in his hands and a six-shooter in his belt. He had gone but about fifty yards when he saw a number of men in front of him. He raised his rifle and fired once, but just then a volley rang out and he fell to the ground, his body riddled with twenty-eight bullet holes.

A notebook was found in Champion's vest pocket soaked with blood, and with a bullet hole through it. Under the printed date of April 9th, the following entry was written in pencil:

"Me and Nick was getting breakfast when the attack took place. Two men here with us—Bill Jones and another man. The old man went after water and did not come back. His friend went out to see what was the matter and he did not come back. Nick started out and I told him to look out, that I thought that there was some one at the stable and would not let them come back. Nick is shot, but not dead yet. He is awful sick. I must go and wait on him. It is now about two hours since the first shot. Nick is still alive. They are still shooting and are all around the house. Boys, there is bullets coming in like hail. Them fellows is in such shape I can't get back at them. They are shooting from the stable and river and back of the house. Nick is dead. He died about 9 o'clock. I see a smoke down at the stable. I think they have fired it. I don't think they intend to let me get away this time.

"It is now about noon. There is some one at the stable yet. They are throwing a rope out at the door and dragging it back. I guess it is to draw me out. Boys, don't know what they have done with them two fellows that stayed here last night. Boys, I feel pretty lonesome just now. I wish there was some one here with me, so we could watch all sides at once. They may fool around until I get a good shot before they leave. It's about 3 o'clock now. There was a man in a buckboard and one on horseback just passed. They fired on them as they went by. I don't know if they killed them or not. I seen lots of men come out on horses on the other side of the river and take after them. I shot at the men in the stable just now; don't know if I got any or not. I must go and look out again. It don't look as if there is much show of my getting away. I see twelve or fifteen men. One looks like [name scratched out]. I don't know whether it is or not. I hope they did not catch them fellows that run over the bridge towards Smith's. They are shooting at the house now. If I had a pair of glasses I believe I would know some of these men. They are coming back. I've got to look out.

"Well, they have just got through shelling the house like hail. I hear them splitting wood. I guess they are going to fire the house to-night. I think I will make a break when night comes, if alive. Shooting again. I think they will fire the house this time. It's not night yet. The house is all fired. Good-bye, boys, if I never see you again.

NATHAN D. CHAMPION."

Sam T. Clover, special correspondent of the *Chicago Herald*, who accompanied the regulators, after describing the trip from Cheyenne to the KC ranch, the capture of the two trappers and the shooting of Nick Ray, gave the following account of Nate Champion's tragic death:

"The roof of the cabin was the first to catch fire, spreading rapidly downward until the north wall was a sheet of flames. Volumes of smoke poured in at the open window from the burning wagon, and in a short time through the plastered cracks of the log house puffs of smoke worked outward. Still the doomed man remained doggedly concealed, refusing to reward them by his appearance. The cordon of sharpshooters stood ready to fire upon him the instant he started to run. Fiercer and hotter grew the flames, leaping with mad impetuosity from room to room until every part of the house was ablaze and only the dugout at the west end remained intact.

"'Reckon the cuss has shot himself,' remarked one of the waiting marksmen. 'No fellow could stay in that hole a minute and be alive.'

"These words were barely spoken when there was a shout, 'There he goes!' and a man clad in his stocking feet, bearing a Winchester in his hands and a revolver in his belt, emerged from a volume of black smoke that issued from the rear door of the house, and started off across the open space surrounding the cabin into a ravine, fifty yards south of the house, but the poor devil jumped square into the arms of two of the best shots in the outfit, who stood with leveled Winchesters around the bend waiting for his appearance. Champion saw them too late, for he overshot his mark just as a bullet struck his rifle arm, causing the gun to fall from his nerveless grasp. Before he could draw his revolver a second shot struck him in the breast and a third and fourth found their way to his heart.

"Nate Champion, the king of cattle thieves, and the bravest man in Johnson county, was dead. Prone upon his back, with his teeth clenched and a look of mingled defiance and determination on his face to the last, the intrepid rustler met his fate without a groan and paid the penalty for his crimes with his life. A card bearing the significant legend, 'Cattle thieves, beware!' was pinned to his bloodsoaked vest, and there in the dawn, with his red sash tied around him and his half-closed eyes raised toward the blue sky, this brave but misguided man was left to lie."

Early in the morning of the attack, Terrence Smith, a ranchman living four miles north, heard the sound of firing and rode over to investigate. When he saw what was taking place, he rode with all possible haste to Buffalo, arriving there at 7:30 in the evening, and notified Sheriff Angus. The sheriff called upon Captain Meuardi to assemble Company C of the National Guard to assist him in repelling the invasion and arresting the men. Captain Meuardi refused to comply with the sheriff's order and gave as his reason an order received by him from the governor a few days prior, commanding him to obey no call in aid of the civil authorities, except through the commander-in-chief. The sheriff then swore in a posse of six men and started for the KC ranch.

Flagg and his stepson, Alonzo Taylor, after their escape, hurried on to John R. Smith's ranch, arriving there about four o'clock. Flagg was a delegate to the democratic convention at Douglas and had planned to meet the other Johnson county delegates at Smith's ranch and proceed to the convention with them. He told of his experiences at the KC ranch and then rode to Trabing, thirty miles distant, reaching there at 9 o'clock. Three men joined him at this place and they returned to the Nolan ranch. On the way they met twelve more men who had been called out by Terrence Smith while on his way to Buffalo. As this combined force was about to proceed, the regulators were seen approaching. Flagg and the other men prepared to give battle from ambush, but their camp fire and the accidental discharge of one of their guns warned the regulators and they detoured, returning to the Buffalo road.

Flagg and his men then camped for the night and the next morning started for Buffalo and on their way passed the regulators, who

were at Dr. Harris's TA ranch on Crazy Woman creek. They were building a fortification at this place, which naturally led to the supposition that they expected the settlers to make an attack upon them in retaliation for the killing of Ray and Champion and the burning of the KC ranch house. When Flagg reached Buffalo Sunday forenoon, the authorities had not yet left for the field of battle. Couriers had been sent out in all directions calling for volunteers to fight the regulators, and Sunday evening at 8:30, forty-nine men armed with rifles and revolvers started to do battle at the TA ranch. A. S. Brown was the leader and when they arrived near the TA ranch at about midnight, pickets were posted around the buildings and both sides waited for daylight before the fight would commence. Just at the break of day, the posse took positions in sheltered places on all sides of the buildings. The regulators, who had gotten their fort in good shape, opened fire on the posse, but no one was hit. However, they kept the members of the posse from getting near enough to do any effective shooting.

Sheriff Angus, who had gone to the KC ranch to see what damage had been done, returned to Buffalo at about 1 o'clock Monday afternoon and after informing the people of the killing of Champion and Ray and the burning of the ranch house, a number of men were sent out to bring in the bodies. The sheriff then started for the TA ranch, accompanied by about forty men. Reinforcements from all sections of Johnson county as well as from Sheridan county had gathered at the seat of trouble until Tuesday afternoon, when there were more than 250 men assembled, acting under orders from Sheriff Angus. In the meantime, the sheriff's posse had captured two of the wagons belonging to the regulators. These wagons contained provisions, bedding, ammunition, kerosene and two cases of dynamite.

At the beginning of the trouble the telegraph line had been cut, but by Tuesday evening it had been repaired and dispatches were sent to the governor in Cheyenne and the president at Washington. Major Martin was ordered by the governor to assume command of C Company of the National Guard and to act under the orders of the mayor of the town of Buffalo to protect life and property in that town.

Colonel Van Horn of the United States cavalry, with three troops, was ordered by the war department from Fort McKinney at 2 o'clock in the morning of the 13th to proceed to the TA ranch and place the regulators under arrest. The troops arrived at 6 o'clock in the morning. Before they arrived, the posse had dismantled the two wagons they had captured and by using the hind axles and wheels had constructed a portable breastworks and were rapidly advancing on the fort. A dozen men who were safely behind the movable breast-

works had advanced to within about 200 feet of the fort when the troops arrived. The posse was ordered by Colonel Van Horn to cease firing and the men behind the shield were ordered to the rear. Colonel Van Horn, Major Fechet, Captain Parmelee, of the governor's staff, two orderlies and three color sergeants, then advanced to the fortifications waving a flag of truce. Major Wolcott, who was in command of the regulators, came forth and in reply to a command from Colonel Van Horn to surrender, said, "I will surrender to you, but to that man [turning and pointing to Sheriff Angus], never. I have never seen him before, but I have heard enough of him and rather than give up to him, we will die right here. He has the best of us now, because our plans have miscarried, but it will be different yet."

Had it not been for the timely arrival of the federal troops, the settlers with the bullet-proof portable shield would have advanced to the fort and set it on fire, using the same means to protect themselves as did the regulators when they set fire to the KC ranch house. Had this occurred, there is no doubt but all the men in the fort would have been killed.

An examination of the buildings at the TA ranch showed that the fortifications constructed by the cattlemen were wellnigh impregnable and that the storming of them would have entailed a heavy loss of life upon the besiegers. Breastworks four feet high, made of sawed pine logs, 8 x 12 inches, were laid up on the north, east, and south sides of the house, which itself was built of the same material. The ice house north of the main building was also loopholed. A fort had been built 200 yards west of the dwelling house, of the same material and in it ten men were concealed. The horses belonging to the party were shut up in the stable which was situated half way between the dwelling and the fort referred to and the walls of the loft of the stables had been strengthened and loopholed.

The government troops took charge of the situation immediately upon the surrender of the regulators and one troop of the cavalry surrounded the buildings; all the regulators were disarmed and, with the exception of one man who was wounded, were marched to Fort McKinney, where they were kept under guard. Among the men arrested were Major Wolcott, W. C. Irvine, J. N. Tisdale, F. M. Canton, W. J. Clarke, F. H. Labertoux, F. G. S. Hesse, Phil Du Fran, D. R. Tisdale, M. Shonsy, L. H. Parker, C. S. Ford, and A. R. Powers, all of whom were either cattle owners or working for large cattle outfits. The remainder of the fifty-two men were the gunmen imported from outside the state.

By this time the news had spread over the country like wild fire. In Buffalo, Casper, Douglas, Sheridan, Cheyenne, and many other

towns in the state, all was excitement and unrest. Rumors of all kinds, preposterous, ludicrous, probable, and improbable were in the air. It was the main topic of conversation whenever two or more men were together. There were some, but they were very few, who contended that the invaders were justified in their acts. But there was no question that they were not acting within the confines of the law when they burned the KC ranch house and killed Champion and Ray, even though the place was a rendezvous for rustlers and if it were true that the two men were cattle thieves. The man who sympathized with the regulators was exceedingly unpopular.

In Casper a mass meeting was held at the town hall at which nearly every business man in town was present and after much discussion, the following resolutions were adopted:

"Resolved, That we extend to the people of Johnson county our sympathy in this, the hour of their trial, and congratulate them on their moderation and prudence during the whole affair, and trust that in the future, as in the past, they may be guided by prudence, wisdom and unswerving loyalty to the principles of a free government, namely; the maintenance and execution of the law.

"Resolved, That we do detest and condemn stealing in all forms and do severally and collectively pledge our property, our lives and our sacred honor to the protection of the property and lives of all who may come among us, or become interested in property in our state.

"Resolved, That we especially regret the state of distrust and fear that has been engendered among people not personally cognizant of the true condition of affairs, and that we do assure them that their fears are groundless, and that in investing in Wyoming and helping develop its untold resources, they are perfectly safe and will reap a plentiful reward."

Guns and ammunition sufficient to arm two dozen men were stored in a small building in the business section of Casper and men had been selected who held themselves ready at all times to use them should the occasion arise. Reports were circulated to the effect that another body of the regulators was coming to assist the first detachment and arrangements were made to send a body of men from here to assist the civil authorities of Johnson county should the reports prove true. Men were on guard day and night; the road to Buffalo was watched and everything was in readiness for war should another detachment of regulators make its appearance. Excitement was at a high pitch for a week; and not until the captured regulators were taken to Fort Russell did the people relax and settle down to a feeling of safety.

Two days after the surrender of the regulators, the burial of Champion and Ray took place in Buffalo, and also that of Coroner Watkins, who had died while engaged in holding an inquest over the remains. The funeral services were held in a vacant store building on Main street. The room was full of women; few men could get in.



The caskets were profusely decorated with flowers. Rev. W. J. McCullim offered prayer in which he said: "We thank Thee, O God, that there are those who have stood by the law. We pray that the law may be strengthened; that if we cannot get justice here, then in the other world." The funeral procession then moved out to the cemetery. The hearse was followed by carriages, wagons, footmen and last, 150 mounted men, three women and two boys.

Criminal complaints had been sworn out against the fifty-two men, charging them with murder and arson and Sheriff Angus appeared before Colonel Van Horn at Fort McKinney demanding the surrender of the men to the civil authorities of Johnson county, but the demand was denied. Sheriff Angus then made an appeal to Acting Governor Barber requesting that the prisoners be turned over to the civil authorities for trial. Governor Barber replied that such action would not be taken until order had been established in Johnson county and the sheriff was directed to turn over the prisoners he had lodged in the jail previous to the surrender of the cattlemen. After the governor had ordered the men turned over to the military authorities on an order from the secretary of war to that effect, Colonel Van Horn telephoned to Sheriff Angus to know if one troop of cavalry would be sufficient to send over for Allen, the prisoner in the sheriff's charge, or whether he had better send three troops. The sheriff replied, "If you send one or three troops, the chances are that there will be trouble. But if you want your man, detail one soldier." Accordingly, a sergeant and driver were sent in an open wagon. When they arrived at the court house there were 200 armed men in line on either side of the walk leading from the street to the court house door. The sheriff met the sergeant at the sidewalk, the men fell back, leaving a five-foot open way to the door through which the sheriff and detail walked and entering the court house, they went directly to the jail door. The prisoner, Allen, was brought out, the soldier signed a receipt for him, and the three went to the east door. When Allen saw the multitude of armed men he hesitated, but the soldier dragged him through the lines to the wagon. No one interfered, and the prisoner, under the guard of the soldier and the town marshal, was driven to Fort McKinney, three miles away.

Three troops of cavalry under command of Major Fechet left Fort McKinney for Fort Fetterman on April 18 in charge of the captured cattlemen, under orders from the war department. At Fort Fetterman, a detachment of soldiers from Fort D. A. Russell took the prisoners in charge and escorted them by rail to Cheyenne where they were quartered for sixty days at the fort. Major Wolcott, State Senator John N. Tisdale, and several others were released on parole.



Major Wolcott went to Washington in an endeavor to clear himself and his friends from any charges which might be made against them as a result of the expedition into Johnson county and also to seek the establishment of martial law there.

The two trappers, Jones and Walker, who had been captured and held during the attack at the KC ranch, were believed to be the only witnesses, besides the regulators, of the killing of Champion and Ray and the burning of the KC ranch house. The cattlemen employed F. H. Harvey, a lawyer of Douglas, and O. P. Witt, a livery stable keeper of the same place, to get the witnesses out of the country. The two men were told upon their release at the Nolan ranch to go south and to remain silent as to what they had seen and heard if they wished to avoid trouble. When they arrived in Casper several days later, they found that public sentiment was against the regulators and they did not hesitate to tell all about the affair.

Friends of the settlers wanted the men held as witnesses against the regulators and friends of the cattlemen naturally wanted them to leave the country. They were made to believe that the cattlemen would kill them and they became very much frightened. There was no jail in Casper and Sheriff O. M. Rice had no place of safety for them to stay and it was agreed that they should accompany Colonel E. H. Kimball, deputy sheriff of Converse county, to Douglas, where they would be allowed to sleep in the sheriff's office in the front part of the jail until such time as Sheriff Angus would come for them and take them to Buffalo. Several nights after they arrived in Douglas, Walker became intoxicated and Jones walked about the streets with him until about midnight in an attempt to get him sober. Walker wanted to leave the country, saying that each of them would be given a horse and saddle and \$1,000 in cash to go away and not act as witnesses against the cattlemen. They went over to Morton's place where they met eight or ten men and after considerable parleying, offers of money, and then threats, the two men and a guide mounted horses and headed for the east. The guide left them after riding about twenty miles and the two men rode on to Harrison where they boarded the train for Chadron. At Chadron an attempt was made to stop them, but friends of the cattlemen managed to get them on the train and they went to Omaha. In that city another attempt was made by the civil authorities to have the men returned to Wyoming to testify against the regulators, but the cattlemen were successful again and in due time Jones and Walker were put on a train headed for Saint Louis and that was the last seen or heard of them.

Colonel E. H. Kimball, who was at that time publishing a newspaper at Douglas, because of his denunciation of the cattlemen, was

charged with criminal libel by George W. Baxter and others. Mr. Kimball was taken to Cheyenne under warrant and lodged in jail for thirty days, during which time his paper ceased publication. It was necessary for him to furnish a bond signed by a resident bondsman. The editor of the *Northwestern Livestock Journal* finally came to his rescue and he was released and returned home. The case never came to trial for it was the object of the regulators only to suppress the publication of Mr. Kimball's paper until the excitement died out.

A petition signed by eighteen of the largest cattle outfits that had stock in Johnson county was presented to Governor Barber during the summer following the invasion, requesting that Johnson county be placed under martial law. Among other things the petition stated that the petitioners were citizens of the state of Wyoming and of other states in the Union and as such were entitled to the equal protection of the law, and to the protection of their property against theft and depredations, and that the county of Johnson and the territory adjacent thereto was chiefly composed of unclosed lands, especially adapted to grazing, and the live stock ranging thereon was worth several millions of dollars. That for several years the stealing and misbranding of live stock in the vicinity had been of frequent occurrence, and was rapidly growing more prevalent, and that stock thieves continually rode the range and placed their brands upon the unbranded calves of other owners and changed and altered the brands upon the branded live stock of others, thereby destroying all means of identifying the true ownership thereof. These stock thieves had, during the past year, greatly intimidated and threatened other residents in that vicinity and had suppressed, by threatened violence, almost all opposition to their unlawful calling and occupation. Their influence, by reason of their numbers and by their methods of intimidation had become so great as to reach the jury box and almost effectually prevent the conviction of any person charged with stock stealing. As an evidence of this the records of the district court in Johnson county for the previous five years showed many indictments had been found against different persons charged with the stealing of live stock and that in nearly all cases the defendants were acquitted. The acquittals were so flagrant and so contrary to the evidence that the judges deplored the existing conditions and had declared it almost a useless effort and expense to try any person charged with the stealing of live stock. The thieves had grown so bold and so open in their support and defense of stealing that they had notified persons who differed with them to leave the country and in many instances enforced their threats by acts of violence and they further threatened to assassinate those who had fled if they returned.

In March, 1892, the thieves got together at Buffalo and organized and arranged for round-ups in violation of law, and were endeavoring to execute the same when certain owners of live stock in that vicinity obtained from the United States circuit court for the district of Wyoming an injunction order restraining and enjoining the carrying on of these round-ups. The United States marshal and his deputies who went to the vicinity to serve the order of injunction were grossly mistreated and embarrassed in the service of the process of the court, and found it unsafe to remain there. One of the deputy marshals, George Wellman, was foully assassinated without cause or provocation, on a public highroad in that county while going to Buffalo to receive instructions from the United States marshal relating to the service of his injunction order.

The petitioners and others intending to enter upon and carry on the round-up arranged for by law, sent trusted and honest employees to attend to the same, and these men were threatened with violence by the thieves and were compelled to leave the county to avoid death or other violence to their persons. During the summer the number of stock thieves in that vicinity had been greatly augmented by the arrival of other men of the same character from other parts of the country, and there existed in that country an organized plan of driving the stockmen out, so that their property might become common property for the thieves; cattle were being wantonly and openly slaughtered in that section by thieves, some of the slaughtering being done for no other purpose whatever than to gratify malicious motives, and other slaughtering was being done to enable the thieves to market the beef and obtain money therefor. The ranches and homes of owners in that vicinity had many of them been plundered, and the personal effects and furniture there stolen or destroyed, and the occupants of the ranches had been driven from the country by fear. Even women and children at the ranches had received threats of violence, and had been compelled to seek places of safety. Letters in the United States mails had been opened by the thieves, and there existed a general and well-founded belief that letters and information could not be safely confided to the United States mails in that vicinity, and in several instances persons had been warned against sending letters to their friends and had been notified not to go to the postoffice either for the purpose of mailing letters or for the purpose of receiving mail therefrom. It was also claimed that no effort of any kind whatever on behalf of the civil authorities in that vicinity was being made to suppress the stealing, or any of the acts of violence and intimidation, and in many instances the civil authorities, by reason of natural inclination or intimidation,

were working with the thieves and under their influence. That the sheriff of Johnson county openly declared his friendship for those who were known to be thieves, and declared his enmity toward the owners of live stock. With his knowledge, and without any opposition whatever from him, the county was patrolled by large numbers of armed thieves who were permitted to go about heavily armed and prepared at any moment to execute their threat against those who were not in accord with them. It was further represented that there existed in the district named an armed combination of men to prevent the administration of law and justice; that neither life nor property was in any respect safe, and did not and would not receive protection at the hands of the civil authorities. That the country was in a feverish state of excitement and under a complete reign of terror, and both persons and property were wholly at the mercy of the outlaws and thieves who infested that section.

In answer to this petition notices were sent out to the effect that "The authorities of Johnson county invite and desire that all owners of cattle ranging in this county who have either personally or by their foremen and representatives participated in the late armed invasion of this county, send able, trustworthy and discreet persons to their ranches to attend to the rounding up and preservation of their property. The undersigned pledge to them the resources of the county in the protection of their interests here. We would suggest that there are a number of idle cowboys here who have not been branded as outlaws or black-balled by the stock association who will gladly work and help round up the cattle during the coming season."

The above was signed by Sheriff Angus, the prosecuting attorney, and the three members of the board of county commissioners of Johnson county.

President Harrison was also importuned to have martial law established in Johnson county for the same reasons as stated in the petition to Governor Barber, and on June 6 six troops of cavalry from Fort Robinson, Nebraska, were ordered to march to Powder River, Wyoming, and six troops of cavalry from Fort Niobrara, Nebraska, were ordered to march into Wyoming and go into camp at a point between old Fort Fetterman and old Fort Caspar. These cavalry forces moved as directed and remained stationed there all summer. On July 30, President Harrison issued and sent forth a proclamation declaring that "By reasons of unlawful obstructions and assemblages of persons it has become impracticable, in my judgment, to enforce by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings the laws of the United States. After repeated efforts, the United States marshal, being

unable, by his ordinary deputies, or by any civil posse which he is able to obtain, to execute the process of the United States courts;

"Now, therefore, be it known that I, Benjamin Harrison, president of the United States, do hereby command all persons engaged in such resistance to the laws and the process of the courts of the United States, to cease such opposition and resistance and to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes on or before Wednesday, the 3d day of August next.

"In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

"Done at the City of Washington, this 30th day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-two, and of the independence of the United States the one hundred and seventeenth.

BENJAMIN HARRISON."

J. W. Blake, judge of the Second Judicial district, which comprised Johnson and Albany counties, sent a letter to Acting Governor Barber on the 19th of June, requesting that he deliver to the authorities of Johnson county the stockmen then confined at Fort Russell. The judge informed the governor that he had received a certified copy of informations filed against the men, charging them with murder. He stated that he had also received a certified copy of warrants issued by the clerk of the court for the arrest of the parties charged in the information. Judge Blake also made the following requests of the governor:

"First, That you turn over to the sheriff of Johnson county or his deputy, the parties named in his warrants, and give them into his custody at Fort Russell. Second, That before you do this, inform me of the time you will be ready to make the transfer in order that I may give the officer full directions as to the place they shall be held, pending the future proceedings of the court. Pending the time of the trial, I believe it my duty to exercise the utmost diligence and care—first, in placing the prisoners within the custody of the proper officers of the court; second, that they be kept with absolute safety; third, that these things be done in such a way that will entail the smallest possible expense upon Johnson county.

"I do not consider it necessary at this time to have these men taken to Johnson county. I have in view two methods of holding them in custody, both of which will require the assent of the parties accused.

"One is that they be confined at Fort Russell as long as the war department will detain them there; the other that they be confined in the north wing of the penitentiary at Laramie, a portion of the building now unoccupied for any purpose, and where they will not under any circumstances come in contact with any of the convicts confined in another part of the building.

"Should you surrender these men to the judicial department upon this request, my positive order will be given to the officer to whom they are surrendered upon these points in the way I have indicated as to their confinement, and I am satisfied beyond any question that these orders will be obeyed. For this reason I believe that I have a right to make them, and I have never known an officer of Johnson county to disregard any direction I had given him. I must urge upon you, that I insist as soon as the matter can be arranged, wherever these prisoners are detained, they must be kept under the custody of an officer of the court for Johnson county."



On July 5, the prisoners were taken to Laramie where Judge Blake was holding court. Adjutant General Frank Stitzer, of the Wyoming National Guard, accompanied by almost the entire military staff of the governor, accompanied them. They were formally turned over to the deputy sheriff of Johnson county, who took charge of them. An application for a change of venue from Johnson county was made, heard and granted, after a deliberation lasting two weeks, and Cheyenne was selected as the place of trial. The prisoners were then returned to Cheyenne, put in charge of Sheriff A. D. Kelly, and quartered in Keefe's hall, instead of the jail.

On August 7 they were arraigned before Judge Scott, in the district court for Laramie county and three days were consumed in securing a jury. At the close of the third day the sheriff presented a petition to Judge Scott for relief, setting forth that Johnson county was bankrupt; that its officials had not paid the expenses incurred by the detention of the prisoners in Albany county pending the hearing on the motion for a change of venue; that the cost of holding the prisoners, including hall rent, guards and food, was over a hundred dollars a day; that he could not get any money from the Johnson county officials with which to meet these bills; that Johnson county warrants would not take the place of money; that he, as sheriff, would no longer assume responsibility for these current expenses, and prayed for an order of court that would secure him against loss, as he could not longer hold the accused.

When court convened on the morning of August 10, Judge Scott handed down his decision on the above petition which stated that he was unable to issue an order compelling Johnson county to make good the sheriff's disbursements for the maintenance of the prisoners and as he had refused to longer provide for them, the only alternative was to admit them to bail. But as the defense refused to furnish bail, he was forced to release them on their individual recognizances. The prisoners at once signed each his own bail bond for \$20,000 in the two separate cases, and they were all set at liberty, but ordered to appear at the next term of court, in January, 1893.

January 21, 1893, when the case was called for trial nearly all of the cattlemen responded, but the hired gunmen failed to appear. Alvin Bennett, prosecuting attorney for Johnson county, offered a motion to enter a *nolle prosequi*, to which the attorneys for the defense entered an objection. After discussion the court accepted the motion and the prisoners were discharged. A similar motion was made covering the cases of the hired gunmen who had not appeared, and an order of discharge was entered in the court records, also one rescinding the order of forfeiture of bail bonds.



This action of course ended the trial and although the general public severely criticised the courts, it was conceded by many that it was better to discharge the prisoners than to pretend to keep them in custody when they were as a matter of fact freer to go about the streets and to public places than the men engaged in business or those employed in offices, stores or the shops.

At the meeting of the Wyoming Stockgrowers' Association held in Cheyenne on April 4, 1893, John Clay, president of the association, in referring to the unfortunate affair, said: "Not content with the imposition of financial and climatic troubles another burden had to be added to our lot. After a long period of forbearance and patience from range depredations, both petty and wholesale, the trouble culminated a year ago and the so-called invasion of Johnson county took place, which ended unfortunately and gave rise to an almost interminable amount of bad blood, politically and socially. While the invasion is now consigned to history, it developed, during its progress last spring and the long, weary summer months which followed, a spirit of admiration for all classes of the men who had taken part in the expedition. Under the most trying circumstances they stood shoulder to shoulder, scarce a murmur escaping them. Notwithstanding their errors of judgment, we respect them for their manliness, for their supreme courage under the adverse fire of calumny and the usual kicking man gets when he is down. There will be a day of retribution and the traitors in the camp and in the field will be winnowed like wheat from the chaff."

In connection with the killing of Nate Champion, it is well to mention that he was classed as the most daring cattle thief in the state and several attempts had been made before to kill him. About daylight one morning in November, 1891, four men went to his cabin and two of them broke in the door. They leveled their guns at him and Ross Gilbertson who was in bed with him. Champion started to talk and at the same time reached for his six-shooter. The fellows became rattled and one fired with his revolver within two feet of Champion's face, but owing to the dim light or nervousness, he failed to injure him beyond inflicting some powder burns.

In the fall after the regulators were discharged, Dudley Champion, a brother of Nate, was shot and killed by Mike Shonsy about twenty miles northwest of Lusk. The two men met on the range and after a few words Shonsy pulled his gun and fired, killing Champion instantly. Shonsy, accompanied by a lad who saw the shooting, immediately started for Lusk, where he gave himself up to the officers. A preliminary hearing was at once had, the boy swearing that Champion drew his revolver first, and that Shonsy fired in self-

defense. This relieved Shonsy from blame and he was released. A few hours later he took the train for Cheyenne and from there took the afternoon train south, presumably going to Mexico. Twenty-four hours after Shonsy's release by the court at Lusk, other witnesses arrived and it was claimed that Champion had made no gun play and that the killing was unprovoked, cold-blooded murder on the part of Shonsy, but no action was taken to bring him back and answer for the crime.

A number of other killings occurred as a result of the invasion, but after thirty years, the bad blood has ceased to exist, for many of the men on both sides have been called to that Judgment where justice is done to all.

The killing of the two men and the burning of property by an organized band of men who acted as judge, jury, and executioner, was a regrettable and deplorable affair. It gave to Wyoming a name for lawlessness that kept many good people from coming here and thus retarded our growth and development, but on the other hand, it had its good effect, for many men who had no vocation and existed by semi-lawlessness with perfect security, soon became solid, law-abiding citizens, whose every act would stand the light. The cattle rustlers could see their finish and many of them filed on homesteads and engaged in ranching and stockraising. Then people from other states came and settled and developed the land, turning patches of sagebrush, cactus and greasewood into beautiful fields of alfalfa. This put the large cattle outfits out of business; the open range "with a thousand cattle on every hill" is a thing of the past; comfortable homes and prosperous ranches have been established where there were thousands upon thousands of acres and miles upon miles of barren land without a fence or house in sight. What a wonderful and welcome change!

### WAR BETWEEN CATTLEMEN AND SHEEPMEN

Three thousand sheep were trailed into Natrona county in the summer of 1888 by Joel J. Hurt to be turned out on the open range. This was the first band of sheep that was brought into the then exclusive cattle country. Now we have more than 300,000 sheep ranging within our borders. The bringing in of these sheep and those that followed caused as much contention and bloodshed as the fights between the cattlemen and the "nesters" and rustlers.

People nowadays will naturally wonder why there should have been so much animosity between two classes of men engaged in similar pursuits in a country which had always been termed the "free

and boundless west," where every man was supposed to have an equal chance with every other and where there was room for all. In the beginning there was plenty of room for all, but there came a time when the settlers cut up the country into ranches and the land available for free pasturage shrank until there was room only for the strongest. But this was not the real cause of the contention between the sheepmen and the cattlemen. It arose from the difference between the two classes of livestock and the further fact that the cattlemen had been "monarchs of all they surveyed" on the open range and they were opposed to anyone else coming in who might in any way interfere with them.

The cattle were turned out on the range to wander at their will without being disturbed except by an occasional rustler, but the sheep, the cattlemen claimed, were nomadic and gregarious. Wherever a band of sheep had fed they said the cattle would not go. The argument was put forth that a flock of 3,000 sheep would march across the country, eating the grass down to the roots, and what they did not eat they would tramp out with their sharp little hoofs, and pack the soil and destroy its porosity so that the grass would not grow after they had passed. They would pollute the watering places and leave behind an odor that cattle would not tolerate. These charges, taken in connection with the constantly shrinking free pasturage, were the reasons the cattlemen hated the sheep raisers and tried to drive them out of the country. As a general thing the cattlemen always got the best of the fight, because a band of sheep were generally looked after by two or three men and a dog, while from ten to a dozen cattlemen came, and in the night time, too, to look after the sheepmen.

After the sheepmen came into the cattle country, the days of the "free range," when the grass belonged to whomever chose to take it, were numbered. It was plain to be seen that the loss of the enormous free range would gradually turn the cattlemen into farmers who would feed their cattle in the winter with hay, corn, and cottonseed and it would make ranch hands out of the once free and independent cowboy, and the vast roaming herds of cattle would be gone forever.

There were physical and mental differences between the cowboy and the sheep herder. From the very nature of his occupation, the cowboy was a wild, free being. He broke the savage and almost untamable broncho to the saddle and then rode him. His work was swift and vigorous and his charges were the great, strong, free steers and cows that never knew the touch of human hands. He lived and endured hardships with others of his kind and his pleasures were as fierce as his work. His was the strenuous life.

The sheep herder, on the other hand, pursued his solitary occupation afoot, his only companions being his dog and his thousands of sheep, which have no individuality and are maddeningly, monotonously alike. The very lonesomeness of his occupation made the sheep herder either a morose and sullen brute or a poetic dreamer.

Cowboys were known to stand off from a band of sheep and with their rifles pick off sheep after sheep until they had exhausted all their ammunition, and when they could shoot no more, ride away, exulting over the fact that they had caused a loss to the sheep owner. If a herder should attempt to fight back, he, too, was generally shot at. A favorite source of amusement for some of the cow punchers was to gather a hundred or so head of steers and drive them pell-mell through a flock of sheep, killing many and scattering the rest in all directions. Others have driven hundreds of sheep over a steep precipice, thus causing a great loss to the sheepman. All that was necessary to get a band of sheep started over a bank was to start a few of the leaders off and then the whole band would go over with a rush and cause a "pile-up" of the poor dumb brutes, and they were either killed from the fall or smothered by being piled one on top of the other from ten to twenty deep.

The cattlemen drew an imaginary line on the range which they called a "dead line." While most of the land was owned by the government and the cattleman had no more title to it than the sheepman, thousands of acres of good grazing land were laid out by the cattlemen as the "cattle country," and if a sheepman dared to pass over their dead line with his flock he was visited in the night by a band of men and the herders were killed, the wagons burned and the flocks scattered. Unparalleled and the most sickening barbarity was practiced both to human beings and the poor dumb brutes.

This practice of brutality, destruction, and death was kept up for about twenty years by men who, for the most part, got their start by rustling, and it seemed to meet with approval by some people, and even some of the officers of the law and the courts seemed to be but little concerned.

In the Sweetwater country numerous sheep camps were burned, the sheep killed and the herders shot at because the "dead line" was crossed, but the men who committed these depredations were never brought into court for the reason that those who had suffered the loss were reasonably sure that a trial in the courts would result in a farce and only cause more trouble.

On the 24th of August, 1905, ten masked men visited the Louis A. Gantz sheep camp, which was located about forty miles from the

town of Basin, and they clubbed and shot to death about 4,000 head of sheep, burned the camp wagons and shot a team of horses valued at \$400. About \$700 worth of grain and provisions were also destroyed. The Gantz sheep, about 7,000 in number, were being taken to the Big Horn forest reserve and the settlers along the foot hills of the mountains complained that the stock was being moved unnecessarily slow and that they were destroying the home range of the settlers. The men who committed this crime were so bent on destruction that even the sheep dogs were tied to the wagons and burned. The men who were in charge of the sheep were given some provisions and told to leave the mountains and never return, and they lost no time in complying with the demand, considering themselves fortunate in escaping alive. Mr. Gantz suffered his loss as the many who had suffered before him and nothing was ever done to bring the men to justice who committed the act, although it was well known who perpetrated the heinous deed.

There was one case, however, where the perpetrators were brought into court. A raid was made April 3, 1909, on No Water creek, in the Ten Sleep country, between Thermopolis and Worland, when Joe Allemand, a sheepman from Natrona county, with his camp mover, Joseph Emge, and sheep herder, Jules Lazier, were shot to death in the night time and their bodies burned. The wagons were destroyed by fire and many sheep were slain. The crime was so revolting that the Wyoming Woolgrowers association offered a large reward for the apprehension of the murderers, and at the session of the grand jury held in Basin the first part of May, true bills were returned against George Sabin, Herbert L. Brink, Milton Alexander, Ed Eaton, Tom Dixon, Charles Faris, and William Keyes. At the November term of the district court Faris and Keyes showed the white feather and turned state's evidence, with the understanding that they should not be prosecuted. Brink was the first to be tried and he was found guilty of murder in the first degree, and was sentenced to be hanged, but a compromise was made with the court and it was understood that the sentence would be commuted to life imprisonment, provided two of the others would plead guilty to murder in the second degree and the other two would plead guilty to arson. It was claimed that Faris and Keyes were the actual murderers, and the court and the people in general naturally felt that it was unfair that they should escape and the others should suffer, but the prosecuting attorney had promised them this reward for turning state's evidence, and they were the chief witnesses against their companions in crime. In accordance with the compromise and agreement Alexander and Sabin pleaded guilty to murder in the second degree and each was



sentenced to serve from twenty to twenty-six years in the penitentiary. Tom Dixon and Ed Eaton pleaded guilty to the crime of arson and they were each sentenced to the penitentiary from three to five years. At the same term of the district court a poor Mexican sheep herder, who had shot and killed a gambler because he had been robbed by him, was convicted of murder in the first degree and given a sentence of life in the penitentiary. Judge Parmelee, who presided at the trial of the cattleman, as well as at the trial of the Mexican, was severely condemned by some of the newspapers of the state because of his light sentence upon the men who had committed the atrocious crime of killing the three sheepmen, slaughtering the sheep and destroying the property, and the seemingly severe sentence upon the Mexican shepherd who had killed a professional gambler who had robbed him of all his money, and to an unprejudiced and unbiased public it would truly seem that the Goddess of Justice did have her face turned to the wall at that term of court.

When the men left the little town of Basin to be taken to the penitentiary there were many prominent people at the railway passenger station to bid them farewell and express the hope that they would all soon be pardoned and be allowed to return home; all but Lorenzo Paseo, the Mexican shepherd. He received no sympathy and no one expressed the hope that he would be pardoned or that he would ever return, because in the heat of passion he had shot and killed a gambler who had robbed him of his last penny. But the other men had premeditatedly murdered three men, slaughtered a thousand dumb sheep and destroyed by fire the property of the men they had sneaked upon in the night time and killed; these were the men that were attracting the sympathy of the public.

Of the six men, who were taken to the penitentiary, five of them received every consideration that it was possible for the warden to give them. Paseo, however, received no favors, and in the summer of 1912 he led a revolt by a dozen other convicts and broke through the prison walls and in his attempt to make good his escape, he shot a citizen of Rawlins who attempted to effect his capture, and a few minutes later he himself was shot dead, and thus ended his miserable existence. Ed Eaton, who was to have served three to five years, died on June 1, 1912, just five months before his term would have expired. Tom Dixon served his three-year sentence and was discharged November 1, 1912. Alexander, with the twenty to twenty-six year sentence, was paroled on December 14, 1914, and pardoned February 13, 1917. Sabin was soon made a "trusty," or an "honor" convict, and was allowed to work on the public highway instead of inside the prison walls, and on December 17, 1913, while "working"



in the Basin country, among his friends, he "escaped" from the guards and has not since been seen by the authorities. A feeble attempt was presumed to have been made by the authorities to capture him, but they were careful not to make the search too diligent. It is claimed that he went to South America. Brink, who was first sentenced to be hanged, but according to agreement the sentence was reduced to life imprisonment, had his sentence commuted by Governor Joseph M. Carey on December 4, 1914, to from twenty-five to twenty-six years. Because of the liberties and favors extended to him by the prison and some of the state authorities Brink was looked upon by many of the convicts as a hero. A few years after his incarceration, a negro, who had committed a heinous crime upon a white woman, was brought into prison because it was feared a mob would take him from the county jail and hang him, but the state prison was not as safe a place as the county jail, for Brink was the leader among the convicts who hanged the negro to the topmost gangway of the cell house in the penitentiary. The state and prison authorities made an "investigation" of the hanging, but they were unable to discover who committed the act, and as the negro deserved to be hanged, it was considered that the job was well executed and it was presumed the authorities did not press the investigation very closely. On December 8, 1914, Brink was paroled and on May 15, 1917, he violated his parole and left the country. Nothing was heard from him until February 11, 1922, when he was returned to the penitentiary to serve out his commuted sentence. He was captured by the authorities of Vancouver, B. C. He had been living with his sister since his escape, and after three children had been born to the brother and sister, as father and mother, he then deserted the poor woman and unfortunate children, and the woman complained to the authorities of her brother's treatment. The authorities returned him to the Wyoming penitentiary, and it is said he is constantly in dread of receiving the same treatment that he helped mete out to the negro who had committed a less revolting crime.

But coming back to the wars between the cattlemen and sheepmen. The Allemand, Enige and Lazier case was similar to many cases that had previously occurred and a number that have since been committed, except that the perpetrators of the crimes were not even brought into court. But now, since it has been learned that the sheep do not devastate the range, befoul the water and "leave an odor that the cattle will not tolerate," and that there is fully as much profit in sheep growing as there is in cattle raising, the dead lines have been removed; cattle and sheep feed on the same range and drink from the same water hole, and many of the early-day cattlemen

now own large flocks of sheep and the deadly wars between the cattlemen and the sheepmen are no more. And it is well that it is so.

### GUIDE MURDERS TWO MEN

"The Monument," cut from a slab of rough Pennsylvania granite, standing about eight feet above the ground, fourteen inches in thickness, with cross arms four and one-half feet long, and weighing several thousand pounds, in a lonely spot along a trail on Monument creek, in Carbon county, about eighteen miles from Alcova and fifty-two miles in a southwesterly direction from Casper, is the silent marker for one of the most deliberate and dastardly murders that has ever been committed in Central Wyoming.

Inscribed on the base of this rough cross, 'way out on the lone prairie, the brief inscription gives but this information: "To the memory of God, and in the name of I. Morris Waln, of Philadelphia, Pa. Born July 12th, 1866, murdered by his guide July 28th, 1888."

There is a question as to whether the date inscribed on the monument is the correct date upon which the murder was committed, as will be noted from a sketch by Boney Earnest, who claims that he saw Waln and two other men on August 8; and there were two men murdered, instead of one, as the inscription would indicate.

I. Morris Waln of Haverford, Pennsylvania, and C. H. Strong of New York City came west on a hunting, prospecting and pleasure trip in the early spring of 1888.

At Wichita Falls, Texas, they outfitted with a wagon, team of mules and two saddle ponies and came north, arriving in Denver early in June. They remained in that city for a week, and in Denver they hired a man named Thomas O'Brien as cook, guide and teamster, and started for Bozeman, Montana. Near Rock Creek, Wyoming, they found game in abundance and they remained in that vicinity two days, killing game. On July 27 the party reached Boney Earnest's ranch on Canyon creek. Strong talked with Mr. Earnest, and among other things he told him that they were on their way to Bozeman, where they intended buying a bunch of horses, ship them east and sell them at a good profit.

"I saw them again on the 8th of August," says Mr. Earnest, "while I was on my way to Oil City to attend a meeting of the miners. I was accompanied by my wife and Miss Castleberry. We were about three miles from the Sweetwater bridge. Waln was driving the team and Strong and the cook were on the saddle ponies. We did not stop to talk to them, but I wondered why they were going back over the same road that they had come over a week previous.

"One morning, about a week later, after we had returned home from Oil City, a man came to the 'Pick' ranch, at the mouth of Sand creek, and he had in a tin can the upper and lower jaw bones of a dead man, and the teeth were filled with gold. The man said while he and a number of cowboys from Colonel Torrey's ranch were on their way home from Rock creek they camped at the Point of Rocks over night. The cook went to a clump of willows to get some wood to start a fire, and in this bunch of willows he discovered the body, which was very much decomposed.

"Art Roberts, living at Ferris, was coroner, and he was sent for to make an investigation. We went to the Point of Rocks, gathered up the remains, held an inquest and buried the body. The verdict of the jury was that the man, unknown, came to his death from a gun-shot wound, inflicted by a party or parties unknown.

"I took a silk handkerchief which was around the neck of the dead man, and a silver bangle off from his wrist, hoping that these might lead to a clue to his identity.

"About a week later, while the men of the Pick Cattle company were gathering beef and rounding up cattle in the vicinity of the Point of Rocks, H. A. Burtch, who was wrangling the saddle horses, discovered another body in a gulch, partly covered with brush. When we went over I at once recognized the dead man as the young man, Strong, on account of his perfect teeth. William High, who was sheriff of Carbon county at that time, and Frank Hadsell, his deputy, were notified, and they made every effort possible to trail the murderer, but owing to the fact that there had been several heavy rains, the trail could not be followed, although we did find that the man had gone in the direction of Laramie City. We learned several months later that Ed. White, Ad. Keith and a man named Snider had met the man on the road between the head of the Bates Hole road and the Little Medicine Bow river. The man had the mules hitched to the wagon and the saddle ponies were following, but the men had not heard of the murder, and took it for granted that the man was traveling through the country with his own outfit. These men gave the information that O'Brien was headed in the direction of the Medicine Bow river.

"For more than a month the officers scoured the country, looking for some trail, but were unable to find anything definite until they learned the story of Messrs. White, Keith and Snider. In the meantime the murderer was going back to Colorado as fast as possible, over the same trail that he and his victims had come over.

"On September 27, while my brother Frank and I were on our way to the Pick round-up, we stopped at several places where the

murdered men had camped. On Dry creek, about eighteen miles from where the two men were killed, we found that the party had camped alongside an irrigation dam. We found where they had had a big fire and the grass was tramped down. There was some paper and other material scattered about in the grass. My brother found a spur about twenty feet from where the fire had been, and on the spur strap was cut in the leather 'Red Dog.' I found several pieces of paper with the name S. M. Waln and J. S. Waln scribbled upon them. In the grass, about forty feet from where the fire had been, I found a letter, which had been torn into small pieces. I gathered up every particle of this letter, and that night at George Mead's ranch, which was about a mile away, we pasted the letter together on some tissue paper, and had no trouble in reading every word of it. The letter was from Miss S. M. Waln, Hamstow Farm, Cheltenham, Pennsylvania, a sister of I. M. Waln. I wrote to the young lady, telling her of the tragedy, and her brother, Jacob S. Waln, immediately left for Wyoming. He came directly to my ranch and I took him to the place where the young men had met their death. He recognized the bangle and the silk handkerchief which I had taken off from the body of his deceased brother. The bodies of both young men were exhumed and taken back east for burial.

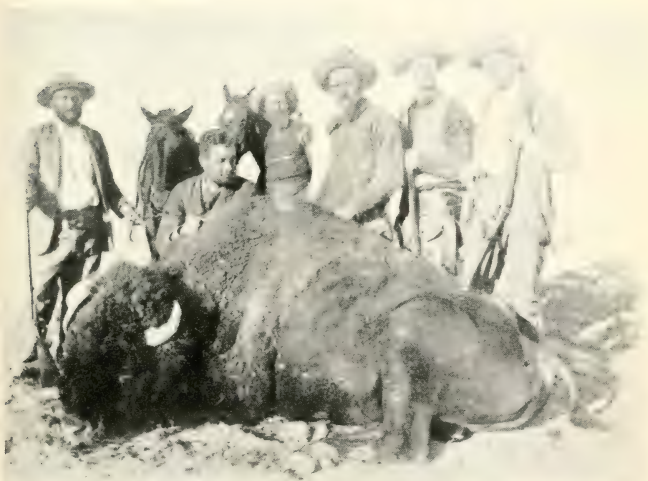
"The Monument, or granite cross, that stands on the spot where the crime was committed, was shipped to Rawlins by Mrs. Harrison, a sister of I. M. Waln, and it was erected by me on December 23, 1889."

O'Brien was trailed to Aspen, Colorado, where it was learned that he disposed of the mules and the other property that he had stolen from the men he had murdered. From Aspen he went to Colorado Springs where he stole some horses. He was captured, tried in the courts and convicted of horse stealing and received a sentence of fourteen years in the penitentiary at Canyon City. Messrs. White, Keith, Snider and Frank Harrington, all of whom had seen O'Brien on the range, accompanied Jacob S. Waln to the Canyon City penitentiary, where the murderer was positively identified as the man who had the team of mules, saddle ponies, etc., and was headed toward Colorado.

Arrangements were made to have the man brought to Carbon county, Wyoming, and stand trial for murder, after he had served his sentence in the Colorado penitentiary for horse stealing, but the fellow died in the penitentiary before he had served his sentence for horse stealing, and thus he escaped the hangman's noose.



"THE MONUMENT," IN MEMORY OF I. MORRIS WALN



"MONARCH OF THE PLAINS," KILLED SIX MILES WEST FROM POWDER RIVER STATION.  
 From left to right: Lord Travillion, Lord Fell, Frank Earnest, Boney Earnest,  
 Charley Cummings, Lord Napier.





# Phenomena of the Plains

## THE CHINOOK WINDS

**T**HAT marvelous phenomenon, the Chinook wind, is the salvation of the stockman of Natrona county. In the dead of winter, with the feed on the range covered with a foot or eighteen inches of hard-packed snow, and the streams a glare of solid ice, and the cattle, sheep and horses in an almost starved condition, the Chinook wind is even more welcome than the flowers that bloom in the spring. Were it not for the Chinook winds there would be but little stock in Central Wyoming on the open range. In the winter of 1886-7, which has gone down in history as the most severe winter in this part of the country since the memory of man, when thousands of cattle died on the range from starvation and being frozen to death, the Chinook winds, for some unaccountable reason, failed to appear, and snow and ice covered the range from November until March.

The "January thaw" in the Middle States is not to be compared with the Chinook winds, which change the climatic conditions in a very few hours from biting cold to the mild spring weather. Snow banks two and three feet deep disappear as though a blast from a furnace was turned on them; the ice in the streams melts away, and the frost is brought forth from the ground. No other phenomenon in this land of meteorological mysteries is quite so unique and distinctive. From the days of Lewis and Clark the Chinook wind has been a delight and a wonder. Its name is derived from the Chinook nation of Indians, a one-time numerous and powerful people inhabiting the north bank of the Columbia from The Dalles to the ocean. Trappers, herdsmen and early agricultural settlers, noting that it came into the interior from the southwest, called it Chinook, under the somewhat mistaken belief that it flowed out of the Chinook country and drew its warm and melting properties from the mild Japan current. Scientific research of later days has shown that this belief was largely erroneous.

The Chinook is not a moist wind like that which blows in from the Pacific, but derives its snow-melting powers from its exceeding dryness. Vapor-laden winds from the Pacific, rising to great heights in the Cascade mountains are drained of their moisture by that mountain wall and become cold, dry and rarefied in those lofty eleva-

tions. In falling from the mountain heights to the plains of the inland empire they are warmed by compression. It has been scientifically determined that the Chinook wind in falling from mountain to plain is warmed at the rate of about one degree for each 180 feet of descent. Here, then, are the peculiar properties of the Chinook wind — warmth and dryness, melting the snows by its low temperature and sucking them up by its thirsty properties.

When the Chinook wind has reached the Rocky mountains after leaving the Cascades it is again moisture laden and this moisture is precipitated by that high range and its deviating spurs. It is rendered dry at the summit of the Rockies and is again warmed by its rapid descent to the plains, and this benign influence is often extended to the Dakotas.

To the people inhabiting the vast interior this Chinook wind has ever been a joy and a mystery. When snows lay deep, the lakes were ice-bound, and Indian herds were famishing, and aborigines, from the Mandans of Dakota to the Yakimas and the Walla Wallas, sought to propitiate this great spirit by incantations and long-continued dances. In after years the white herdsman, despondent, as he saw his horses and cattle dying on the frozen snows, found cheer and returning fortune in its warm and melting breath.

### THE MIRAGE ON THE PLAINS

The mirage is another singular phenomenon that often appears on the plains of Wyoming. Unlike the Chinook winds, which make their welcome visits in the winter months, the mirage is a phenomenon of the summer months, and is as oppressive and distressing to the weary, thirsty traveler as the Chinook wind is helpful to the almost frozen, starved animals of the plains. <sup>1</sup> To see a mirage to the best advantage requires favorable conditions, both physical and mental. Not alone must the plain, the atmosphere, and the sun be right, but the effect will be greatly heightened if the mental state of the beholder has been suitably prepared for the phenomenon. To this end, suppose him to be journeying over one of those barren, even tracts which so extensively abound in the deserts of the west. The sun is almost unendurable in its intensity; the ground is parched and dry; the grass withered and sparse; no tree or shrub relieves the landscape; no sign of water is visible anywhere; while the oppressive heat and the cravings of thirst tax his endurance to the utmost. In the midst of his sufferings comes the promise of relief. Several miles ahead of him, in a gentle depression, he distinctly sees a body of water; it may be a

<sup>1</sup> Chittenden, Vol. 2, p. 756.

river, but more probably a lake. Its surface gleams in the sun and here and there it is roughened by passing breezes. The shore line is distinct and is bordered with objects that look like trees. The sight inspires new life; the spirits rise; and the pace of the traveler is quickened with fresh energy. It is wasted effort on the part of more experienced companions to urge caution in trusting so implicitly to appearances. Confidently he pushes forward, with his eyes fixed on the refreshing sight before him. But as he nears it a change comes over the scene. The surface of the lake begins to show gaps and breaks that he has never noticed on any other lake. These gaps increase as he approaches; the water surface diminishes; it begins to have a trembling, shimmering appearance; it finally vanishes from sight; and when the traveler reaches the spot he is still surrounded by the same cheerless landscape over which he has already traveled so far. With what tenfold power does his thirst now come back, enhanced by the bitter disappointment! The lesson of the mirages or "false ponds" was hard to learn and it required many a chastening such as has been described to place one fully on his guard against it.

The cause of the phenomenon of the mirage is not perfectly understood, and has received a variety of explanations, some maintaining that it is due to refraction alone, others to reflection. Strange as it may seem, these false appearances, if we may trust the many accounts of observers, are sometimes erect, at other times inverted. The necessary conditions of an effective mirage are a broad plain with an extensive horizon free from conspicuous undulations; a dry, hard ground which will reflect readily the rays of the sun; warm, dry and clear weather, so that the eye can easily scan the ground for several miles.

Wislizenus holds that the true mirage always shows objects double, the lower erect by refraction through the stratum of air next to the ground, and the upper inverted by reflection against the surface of a different stratum some distance above. Another authority says that the mirage is an optical illusion, occasioned by the refraction of light through contiguous masses of air of different density; such refraction not infrequently producing the same sensible effect as direct reflection. It consists in an apparent elevation or approximation of coasts, mountains, ships, and other objects, accompanied by inverted images. In deserts, where the surface is perfectly level, a plain thus assumes the appearance of a lake, reflecting the shadows of objects within and around it. The mirage is commonly vertical, that is, presenting an appearance of one object over another, like a ship above its shadow in the water. The mirage in most cases is produced by reflection from the desert sand.

Whatever may be the true explanation, the delusion is a perfect one, and its tantalizing effect upon the thirsty wayfarer is more distressing than the thirst itself.

### “HELL’S HALF ACRE”

“Hell’s Half Acre,” about fifty miles west from Casper, on the Yellowstone highway, is one of the natural curiosities in Natrona county that attracts a great many visitors. It contains some three hundred acres of land, which, in March, 1922, by an act of congress, through the efforts of the Casper Chamber of Commerce, was withdrawn from all forms of entry, and Natrona county agreed to accept it and protect it as a public park provided the land was given to the county, and in December, 1922, Senator Warren introduced a bill favoring the turning over of this land to Natrona county.

In the early days this geological freak of land was known as the “Devil’s Kitchen” which, on account of its occupying more than three hundred acres of land, instead of half an acre, was a much more appropriate name than it now bears. Who gave the place the name of “Devil’s Kitchen” is not known, but it is believed to have received its present name, and the one that it will no doubt in the future be known by, through some one who had confounded it with the original “Hell’s Half Acre,” in Natrona county, which will hereafter be described, together with an explanation as to why and how it received its name.

The original “Hell’s Half Acre” in Natrona county was given its name by the cowboys in the early days. This piece of bad land is seldom seen and nowadays is rarely referred to or thought of, since the days of the open range is a thing of the past. It is a piece of boggy land on the north side of the Platte river, about twenty-two miles southwest from the city of Casper. There is a large bend in the river at this point and there are high banks on the south and east, and on the north is a stretch of meadow land consisting of fifteen or twenty acres. But before you reach this meadow land from the north, you must pass through a patch of bad land which is covered with what first appears to be a bed of white ashes, but this is the scum of alkali which has come to the top of the marshy patch. The place was known only to the cowboys who in the fall of the year came here at the time of the round-up to get their cattle from the pasture land further to the north.

T. J. Healy, known as “Black Tex,” owned this patch of land and he built a cabin near the river. He and his friends often remained here to rest for a few days after a hard ride with a bunch of stolen

horses, which they usually drove in from the northern part of the state.

The cowboys named this marshy spot “Hell’s Half Acre” because it was such a rough, barren, and boggy piece of ground, and that its name is very appropriate will be appreciated by anyone who may be unfortunate enough to ever pass that way.

But referring to the original “Devil’s Kitchen,” now called “Hell’s Half Acre,” it being located alongside the Yellowstone highway, naturally attracts the attention of the thousands of visitors who pass by on their way to the Yellowstone National park. In this weird depression there are deep caverns, crevices and pits, and there are many fantastic shapes resulting from the wearing away of friable material; there are towers, spires, buttresses and other architectural effects, which suggest the ruins of man’s creation, rather than the wearing away of the formation of the earth; here and there standing alone are quaint forms, carved by wind and weather out of the volcanic matter, and then again there are a number of places the effect of which is that of the pyramids of Egypt, dropped down into this not un-Egyptian landscape. It is not easy to depict a scene like this; it is too altogether unusual; too shifting; too grand.

And while it is curious and wonderful to look upon, it could hardly be expected to inspire one to poetical verse, but it did have such an effect upon a lady from California, who had viewed all the wonderful sights in the Yellowstone National park without any poetical symptoms breaking out. Two verses of the six stanzas which the lady indited are herewith produced, not because of the beautiful sentiment expressed in the verse, but just to show the effect the scene created in the mind of the lady.

“A feeling somehow quite uncanny  
Creeps o’er you as you stand and gaze  
At shades and colors, oh, how many,  
That leave your thoughts all in a maze.

“Those gray-green slopes invite your sliding  
Down to see what’s that queer shape,  
That seems to be a gnome a-riding  
Upon a surface once a lake.”

The scene must not, however, be judged by the measure and rhythm of these verses; nor the sentiment expressed. It could have been worse.

The ground in and around this formation is entirely useless for grazing or any other purposes, and is classed, so far as being of real value, with the thousands of acres of the other “bad lands” in the state.

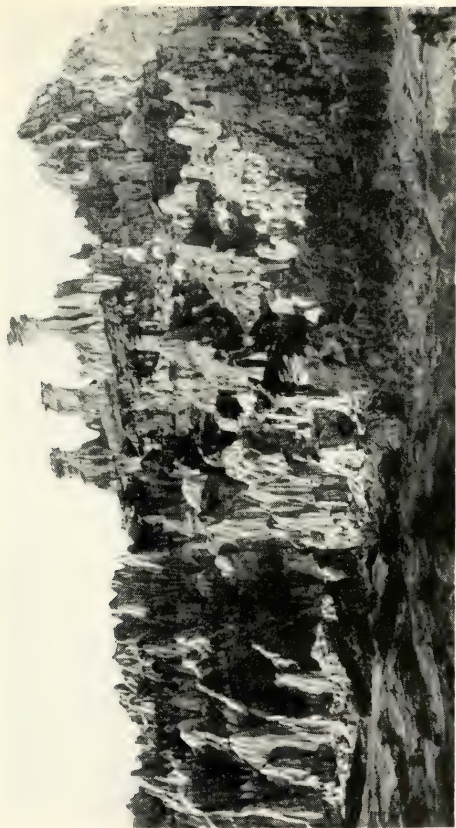


When this part of the country was controlled by the Indians this patch of land was called the "Burning Mountain, near Powder river." When Bonneville visited the place in 1832, according to Washington Irving's description it was "held in superstitious awe by the Indians and considered a great marvel by the trappers." He said: "It is abounding with anthracite coal. Here the earth is hot and cracked; in many places emitting smoke and sulphurous vapors, as if covering concealed fires. A volcanic tract of similar character is found on Stinkingwater river, one of the tributaries of the Big Horn, which takes its unhappy name from the odor derived from sulphurous springs and streams. This last-mentioned place was first discovered by John Colter who, in 1808, came upon it in the course of his lonely wanderings and gave such an account of its gloomy terrors, its hidden fires, smoking pits, noxious streams, and the all-pervading smell of brimstone, that it received, and has ever since retained among trappers, the name of 'Colter's Hell.'"

The coal from this "burning mountain" has long ago been consumed and there are pits, caves, and caverns in the ground which now present the appearance of the inoperating pits of Hades, as is imagined by some people. It is truly a curious and weird formation and will always attract attention.

In late years some who do not fancy the name of "Hell's Half Acre" have attempted to change the name to "Enchanted Land," claiming that an old legend says that in the early days the Indians drove buffalo into this great corral for slaughter and that many flint arrow heads are found in the pits. So far as we are able to learn, "Enchanted Land" is a name for the place that is entirely new to the people who have lived here for many, many years, and the name is also entirely inappropriate. It is too mild, and does not describe the scene as does the "Devil's Kitchen," or "Hell's Half Acre." That flint arrow heads may have been found in the pits and caves gives no foundation for the name "Enchanted Land," for flint arrow heads have been found in thousands of places on the plains, all of which may as appropriately be called the "Enchanted Land." The only thing inappropriate about the present name is that instead of covering one-half an acre of land it covers about 600 times that much, but on the other hand, it may be that an acre covers more territory in the lower regions than it does on this earth, and as there is no one here who can give any authentic information on the subject, there is no doubt but it will always retain the name of "Hell's Half Acre," regardless of its dimensions, and even though it might sound shocking to some people whose aesthetic taste cannot be appreciated by the people of the middle west.





"THE SENTINELS," A PORTION OF "HELL'S HALF ACRE"



Many fossils of the prehistoric age have been found in the vicinity of "Hell's Half Acre." During the summer of 1907 Prof. Reed of the Wyoming University unearthed a perfect skull of a calf titanotherium, an animal which became extinct possibly more than a million years before many of the oldest known fossils were created. This is the largest known animal that ever existed. In contrast to the titanotherium is that of a beaver, which was found near by, and which was scarcely larger than that of a modern mouse, but in every other respect the fossil of the beaver's skull was a counterpart of the present-day animal. One of the most important finds in this fossil field by Prof. Reed was the complete skeleton of a horse no larger than that of a fox, every bone of which was present, which indicated beyond a doubt that the equine race originated in this part of the country. A perfect skeleton of a dog of the aligocene tertiary period was also found. This animal was no larger than the average dog of modern times, but was equipped with a much more formidable array of teeth, indicating that it was a ferocious fish eater. All these fossils were mounted by Prof. Reed and placed in the museum of Wyoming University at Laramie, and are considered of great value.

#### SOME SEVERE STORMS IN CENTRAL WYOMING

Heavy snows prevail in Central Wyoming nearly every year in the early spring. Between the 20th of March and the 20th of April Natrona county is generally visited by a severe storm. In the early days ranch homes and homestead shacks were not as numerous as they are nowadays and hay and grain were not provided for the range stock as they are now. When a severe storm came up there was no feed for the stock or shelter for the men who happened to be some distance from camp and consequently thousands of sheep and cattle perished and men became bewildered and drifted with the storms and they, too, suffered and many lost their lives.

The first week in February, 1891, we had the hardest storm and coldest weather we ever had at that time of the year. The thermometer registered 40 degrees below zero at one time. The snow drifted and Casper, Glenrock, and Douglas were without train service of any kind for a week. Dealers were out of coal and the stores were very short of flour and other necessities of life, and the situation became very serious. The loss of stock on the range was appalling.

E. H. Kimball and his daughter, Lizzie, left Douglas one day during the cold weather and they had almost perished and were in a helpless condition by the time they reached a ranch house, after traveling about ten miles. They were taken in and cared for.

E. Erben and G. C. Merrian were out on the range hunting when the storm came up and they experienced a very serious time. They were out during the whole of one night and when they managed to reach Casper they were in a serious condition, their feet being frozen up to their ankles and their fingers badly frost-bitten. A troop of soldiers marched from Newcastle to Fort McKinnie, near Buffalo, during the severe weather and they suffered many hardships. Many of them were compelled to drop out along the route and remain at ranch houses to receive treatment.

Four successive days and nights during the latter part of March, 1894, this part of the state was visited by a heavy fall of snow and a terrific wind storm, when no less than thirty inches of snow fell and the wind drifted it in many places ten and twelve feet deep. Telegraph wires were down and Casper was shut off from news from the outside world. The train that left Casper and the one that left Chadron on Monday met at Lusk, but were compelled to remain there until the following Monday. The loss of sheep and cattle was very heavy. In the blinding storm herders found it almost impossible to remain with their herds and in some instances, large bands of sheep were left without anyone to look after them. Two of Patrick Sullivan's herders walked to Casper from their camp, a distance of twenty-five miles. They suffered greatly from the cold and said their camp was completely under the snowdrifts and nothing was visible of their wagon except the stove pipe. Quite a number of men on the range who were away from their camps became bewildered and perished. Nearly all the stockmen in Casper went out on the range during the middle of the week to assist the herders in caring for their stock.

During a severe storm the latter part of March, 1895, Noel R. Gascho was with a band of sheep on the open range. The band became unmanageable and drifted with the storm. Gascho went with the sheep, which was the only thing to do. The snow came down in blinding sheets, the cold wind swept over the bleak prairie and hundreds of the sheep were frozen. Gascho said it seemed as though the blood in his veins and the marrow in his bones were frozen. He became numb and sleepy and to keep awake he would stick his legs with a knife blade. About midnight he caught one of the sheep, cut its throat and drank the blood. Then he set fire to the wool on the dead sheep and the greasy wool burned readily. Before daylight, he had burned six sheep after he had cut their throats and drank of their blood. This was all that saved his life.

On the first day of April the same year Patrick Sullivan came nearly being a victim when he became bewildered and lost on the

range. He left Casper on horseback in the morning for one of his sheep camps, but he could not find it and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon started for home. Night overtook him when he was about twelve miles from town, and he said it was so dark that the eye could not penetrate one inch ahead. He struggled and labored with his horse until nearly midnight when he became convinced that he was going in the wrong direction. He concluded to remain where he was until morning. He led his horse back and forth in the shelter of a bank, but he could not keep warm and he was finally compelled to take the saddle blanket from his horse and put it around his shoulders to keep from freezing. In the morning when he found his bearings, he became aware that he was about three miles northwest from the Platte river bridge and that if he had allowed his horse to travel in the direction it was headed in the night it would have brought him safely home. He suffered only the temporary ill effects from his experience, but has since avoided being caught out on the range in a spring snow storm.

The last week in March, 1897, a terrific windstorm prevailed on Sunday. People considered this an unmistakable warning that the annual blizzard was close at hand and on Monday the snow began to fall and continued steadily until Wednesday night. The snow was accompanied by a strong wind, which piled the snow in deep drifts. When the storm abated, more than thirty inches of snow had fallen and all the roads leading to Casper were blocked and all business in the town was practically suspended. No trains arrived for four days. J. A. J. Stewart, the postmaster at Johnstown, near Independence Rock, left for Casper on Monday morning and reached Bessemer late in the night, but he remained at Bessemer eight days before the roads were opened so that he could come to Casper. The miners on Casper mountain, who were out of provisions, came to town on snowshoes and they reported there was from nine to sixteen feet of snow on the mountain. Considerable stock was lost and the men on the range suffered terribly.

On the 29th of March, 1897, snow commenced to fall and continued without interruption until April 2. On the streets of Casper there was three feet of snow and paths had to be shoveled on the cross walks before the citizens could go from one business house to the other. There was no train service for nearly a week and business was practically at a standstill.

A sheep herder named Neal, working for the Jack Wright outfit, perished on the range, but on account of the deep snow his body could not be found. Another herder, working for Earle and Foster, was exposed to the storm three days and nights and became so exhausted that he lay down in the snow. An Indian found him and

carried him to camp, but his hands and feet were badly frozen. Another herder for the same outfit was found in the snow after the storm abated, badly frozen and almost dead from exposure and lack of food. Five herders in Sweetwater county perished in the storm and the loss of stock on the range was very great.

John Wisdom, a herder for Tony Goetz, perished in the Poison Spider country during the snowstorm which prevailed during the first days of April, 1900. From the 7th to the 11th of April, 1901, a snowstorm raged throughout the central part of Wyoming. Four feet of snow fell during the four days and there was a great loss of sheep. The roads were blocked for ten days and people who came to Casper from the country made the trip on horseback. On June 19 and 20, 1902, there was a heavy snowfall throughout the state and the thermometer registered a drop of fifty degrees in the two days. There was a great loss of shorn sheep on the range.

Adie C. Irwin of Alcova nearly lost his life in a snowstorm in March, 1903. He left home on the 17th and rode on horseback to Lost Cabin, leaving there on the morning of the 18th for the foot of Garfield mountain, on the north side of the Rattlesnake range. Snow was falling when he left Lost Cabin, and he had a distance of forty miles to travel. Before he had covered half the distance, he became bewildered in the raging storm and blinded by the snow. He kept moving until nightfall and then he dismounted, hobbled his horse and built a sagebrush fire. He slept in the snow until daylight and then, mounting his horse, started out with no idea of the direction in which he was traveling. For three days he and the horse floundered through the snow, which was then more than two feet deep and both man and beast were on the verge of famishing, as neither had eaten anything for three days. The fourth night, the horse slipped its hobbles and left Irwin afoot and alone on the snowy desert, with both feet frozen and fainting from hunger. He staggered on throughout the day and at night built a fire and thawed his frozen feet, but the pain was so great he was unable to endure it when the frost was extracted from them, and he was obliged to let them freeze again before he could stand upon them. On account of huddling so close to the sagebrush fires to keep from freezing to death his clothing was burned full of holes, and his condition was most pitiable. On the sixth day he was found by Joe Sanderson in a semi-delirious condition and more dead than alive, and had he been compelled to remain exposed to the elements one more night there is no doubt but he would have died. He was cared for by Mr. Sanderson until he could be brought to town when it was found necessary to amputate his left leg above the knee.



Snowstorms and extremely cold weather prevailed in Central Wyoming during the first twenty days of March, 1906, and when the storms subsided and the weather moderated somewhat the sheep and cattle that were yet alive on the range were in a very weak condition, and the flockmasters and cattlemen were compelled to haul hay and grain to their herds, for they were not strong enough to wade through the drifts and rustle feed on the range. The snow was fully two feet deep on the level and there were drifts ten to fifteen feet deep. The weather was extremely cold and several days the thermometers registered thirty degrees below zero. Special trains loaded with feed for the stock were sent west over the Wyoming & Northwestern railway, two days in each week and the regular freight train hauled feed every day and unloaded it at all stations between Casper and Wolton. This saved the stockmen from what no doubt would have been the heaviest loss in sheep that had ever occurred in this part of the country. A number of sheep herders became lost in the storms and suffered terribly from the cold, but none in this part of the state lost their lives.

During the months of December, 1909, and January, 1910, there was one continual snowstorm after another until the range was covered in most places with ice and snow from six inches to six feet deep. The cattle and sheep on the range were fed hay and grain, but thousands upon thousands of sheep perished and many of the flockmasters were compelled to go out of the business. A man named Thomas Mahoney, who was herding sheep for John Love, in the vicinity of Wolton, became lost in the storm and wandered over the prairie three days and two nights without food or shelter. Two sheep dogs were with him and every time he sank to the ground exhausted the dogs, who seemed to understand his condition, would arouse him and lead him on. The man and his faithful dogs finally reached Moneta, where he was given shelter and a doctor was sent for, but the man's feet were both frozen and his kidneys and other internal organs were frozen, and he died after suffering for about ten days. Ed. McLatchie, who was herding for J. A. Delfelder in the vicinity of Moneta, also perished in the storm, but his body was not found until the 6th of March, it having been covered under a snow bank.

Eighteen inches of snow fell in Central Wyoming on April 2 and 3, 1918, and at Rawlins and farther west along the line of the Union Pacific railroad it was reported that the snow was three feet deep. A great deal of stock on the range was lost and a number of men perished in the storm. Added to the loss of stock caused by the spring snowstorms, the summer of 1918 was phenomenally dry, and the feed on the range was parched and burned from the blistering

sun and hot winds; the small creeks and water holes went dry; sheep and cattle suffered from the lack of feed and water and this year went down in history as the "dry year," to be remembered from the loss and suffering of stock equal to the "hard winter" of 1886-7. Many of the cattle and sheep actually starved to death. Shipments were made to market and feeding grounds in other states and by the first of January, 1919, more than forty per cent of all the cattle and sheep in Wyoming had been shipped out, many of them never to be returned. The stock that went to market brought a very small price on account of their poor condition and a great deal of the stock that was shipped to the feeding grounds in other states died in transit because of their starved condition. And then, to add to the suffering and loss of the sixty per cent of the stock that remained in the state, early in October, 1919, severe storms prevailed; the range was covered with snow and ice; there was no feed for the stock except the hay and grain that was hauled to them, and the loss was enormous. Storm followed storm and loss followed loss until it seemed that there would be no stock left on the range the following summer. On December 9, 10 and 11 high winds and a blinding snowstorm prevailed and all the trains on the Chicago & Northwestern and Burlington railway lines were blocked; drifts of snow from three to fifteen feet deep and from one-half mile to a mile long were reported on the tracks of the railroads; the temperature had fallen to twenty and twenty-four degrees below zero in the central part of the state and at Riverton it was reported that the thermometer registered forty-two degrees below; in Casper many of the children were unable to reach the school houses and those that did reach them were dismissed because it was impossible to heat the buildings; snow went sweeping and swirling down the streets, carried by the high winds, like great clouds of smoke; signs were blown from the business houses; windows were broken in and but few people ventured outside.

It was realized that a supreme effort must be made if there were to be any stock left on the range, and the Central Wyoming Stock Growers' Protective association, the Wyoming Humane society, and the Wyoming brand commissioners on December 12 issued a call that revived the spirit of the west in the early days of the cattle round-ups, except that in this round-up the work would be exceedingly more perilous, and conditions more hazardous than when the regular spring and fall round-up were made in palmy cattle days. Experienced foremen were appointed and all stockmen having cattle on the range were notified to have their help on hand for the big drive. Round-ups numbering from one to twelve were organized, with the place of beginning and the country to be worked designated

for each organization; there were to be from a dozen to twenty men in each round-up. All the cattle found on the range were to be taken to the nearest railroad shipping point, where they were to be claimed by the owners. Stock not claimed was to be shipped with the other stock. A finance committee was appointed to see that all expenses were promptly met and that all stock was fed until shipments were made. The expenses of the round-up were to be prorated among those having stock found on the range. The stockmen felt that this action was necessary to save the state her livestock industry. The cattle were shipped to Texas and other ranges. In thirty days during the summer of 1920 more than 1,000 carloads of these cattle were returned to the state, and a large number were shipped to Kansas and Nebraska and from there they were to be shipped in the fall to the eastern markets, while there were many that were kept on the southern ranges and fattened for market.

From April 17th to the 21st, 1920, there were no trains in or out of Casper on account of the heavy snowstorm which prevailed from Saturday until Monday, and the roads to Salt Creek and other points in the interior were impassable for more than a week, thus causing many of the people in the oil camps to do without meats, eggs, butter and other supplies because of the inability to maintain transportation service to the fields. There was no visible shortage of the supply of provisions in Casper. There was a shortage of coal, however, and from 250 pounds to 500 pounds were allowed each person until the supply could be replenished. A Burlington passenger train was tied up at Wendover for three days and a Northwestern passenger train was stalled at Lusk the same length of time. The tracks were covered with fully five feet of snow at each of these stations. The marooned passengers at Lusk held dances during the evenings in the railroad station and impromptu vaudeville performances were given by the passengers to break the monotony of the long wait.

Thousands of birds were driven into Casper from the mountains and the plains and they were fed by the people of the city. These birds became so numerous on the streets that many of them were killed by being run over by automobiles. The birds were followed by numerous hawks. These hawks existed on the small birds that they could kill, and some of the marksmen of the city retaliated on the hawks by using .22 rifles and pistols on them. After the weather moderated, however, the birds and the hawks disappeared.

An airplane was chartered by Roy Sample, manager of the Iris theater, a trip was made to Denver to secure films for his theater,

but the plane was marooned on the aviation field in Denver and the trip home had to be abandoned until train service was resumed.

The loss to live stock as a result of the three-day storm was estimated at about seven and one-half per cent. Dead sheep and cattle were scattered over the range and along the roadside in great numbers and many others were left in a very weakened condition. This storm occurred fully two weeks later in the season than the heavy storms usually occur, but it was one of the heaviest and most severe storms since the big storm of 1897, which started on March 29 and continued three days without abatement, from which there was a great loss of live stock, and a number of men perished.

On the 10th of May, 1922, a heavy snowstorm swept over Wyoming and many of the Rocky Mountain states, paralyzing communication from the rest of the world by the destruction of the telephone and telegraph wires and poles, blocking the railway trains for three days and causing the loss of thousands of sheep and lambs, and cattle and calves. In the central part of the state there was about a foot of snowfall which was preceded for about six hours with a heavy downpour of rain. The storm was not so heavy in the central and western portions of the state, but in the eastern and southern portions there was from eighteen inches to three feet of snowfall, and the destruction to the wires and poles of the telephone and telegraph companies and the loss of stock was much greater than in the central and western parts of the state. More than 1,200 telephones were put out of commission in the city of Casper by the breaking of wires, cables and poles, and about 500 homes were without electric light service on account of the wires and poles being broken down. Eighty-two miles of poles of the Western Union Telegraph company were down between Casper and Chugwater, and there were sixty miles of line down between Wendover and Chugwater, and twenty-two miles of line put out of commission between Casper and Wendover. About the same condition existed on the two railway companies' lines in the central part of the state. It was three days before train service was re-established and forty-eight hours before communication was resumed over the telephone and telegraph wires. The wagon road to Salt Creek, as well as those from the south, west and east, were in an impassable condition for nearly a week; some places in the road it was estimated that the mud was at least four feet deep, and many automobiles, trucks and even wagons were abandoned in the mudholes for a week until the mud dried sufficiently for them to be hauled out. This was the most destructive storm that has ever occurred in the state at this time of the year.

## CASPER MOUNTAIN CAVE

Most people in Casper have heard of a cave in Casper mountain, which is located about two miles east from Eadsville, at the bottom of a large gulch, which in the earlier days attracted considerable interest, but very few people have ever seen it. Those who have penetrated its innermost recesses describe it as being about six feet wide at the entrance and fifteen feet high, making a gradual decline for about fifty yards, some parts of the walls being forty feet high. About seventy-five yards from the entrance there is a wall which at first appears to be the end of the cave, but there is a small hole in the floor of the cavern large enough for a man to get through by crawling on his hands and knees. This small cavity extends several yards and then a large room is entered, the walls of which are of white, hard sandstone, and there is much crystal quartz adhering to the roof and sidewalks. The floor of this large room, which extends more than four hundred feet into the mountain side, is covered with large timbers and driftwood, which has been carried in during the melting of the snows in the spring and the heavy rains that prevail in the summer months. There is a hole at the farther end of this room, leading to another cave, but the timber and debris must be cleared away before one can descend, and the descent must be made by a rope. After searching the bottom, which is down about ten feet, in order to go further, you must again crawl on your hands and knees, then you come to another large room at the far end of which is a small aperture, but it is so small that a man cannot go through, and there his investigations must end.

In order to gain admission to this underground passage, torches and lanterns were used in the early days, but electric lanterns may now be used by the few people who are curious enough to make the trip over the mountains.

## GRAND CANYON'S ROCK CABIN

Above Alcova several miles is the Grand Canyon of the Platte. Near the eastern end of this wonderful canyon, on the north side, about 500 feet above the turbulent waters, there are the remains of a curious cabin, built entirely from rock. A rock shelf projecting sixteen or eighteen feet forms the roof of the cabin and the sides are built up solid with flat rocks. A hole left in the front wall was used as a door. It is said that cow hides were put over this hole in the winter time to keep out the cold. There is a large fire place in the cabin and a chimney projects through the roof, which is also built



from flat rocks. A window, far up in the east wall of the cabin gives it the appearance of a fort. This window commands a perfect view from the east and south and no one could approach within several miles of the place without being seen. The cabin being built from the flat rocks broken away from the sides of the canyon, the little hut would not be noticed until one was almost upon it.

It is said by some old-timers that while the Union Pacific railroad was being built in the early '60's, half a dozen cattle rustlers made this their hiding place after they had run a bunch of cattle out of the country and sold them to the railroad contractors. Cattle-men, however, finally cornered them in the cabin and what was done with them has never been reported, but the rustlers were never seen after the cattlemen captured them. The cabin was partially destroyed at that time and although it has been more than fifty years since the tragedy in the canyon is said to have occurred, no one has ever cared to abide in it since.

#### SHEEPHERDER'S LONELY GRAVE

Along the roadside on the north fork of Buffalo creek, in the Big Horn mountains, eighty-six miles northwest of Casper, is a lonely grave and at the head of this grave is a weather-worn piece of board a foot in length and six inches wide upon which is carved with a pocket knife: "Died June 17, 1904, L. Henderlight." In the summer of 1922, the Boy Scouts of Casper were camped in the beautiful little park which is about a quarter of a mile south of this grave, and they put a wooden cross at the head of the mound. But the details of how the man met his death are known to but a few of the old-time residents of the county. John Henderlite was the man's name, and he was herding sheep for Bunce and Delfelder at the time of his death. Harry Hudson was camp mover for the same firm. Early in the morning, while in the sheep wagon, the two men quarreled and Hudson struck Henderlite over the head three times with a piece of an iron brake handle which had been broken off the wagon. The man's skull was crushed and he fell unconscious to the floor of the wagon. Hudson dragged his victim out of the wagon and laid him on the ground, where he soon died. The sheriff and coroner went from Casper to the scene of the killing and a coroner's jury was impaneled and made an investigation of the tragedy. Hudson claimed that Henderlite attacked him with a knife, and he struck him with the iron in self-defense. There were no witnesses to the sad affair to contradict his statement. One of the men on the coroner's jury favored returning a verdict of self-defense, while two of



the members were in favor of returning a verdict of murder against Hudson, on account of the fact that he had told a number of different stories as to how the killing occurred. Hudson was placed under arrest and brought to Casper and lodged in the county jail. At the preliminary hearing there were no witnesses to dispute Hudson's version of the tragedy, and as he produced a large knife which he claimed that Henderlite attacked him with and as his story seemed reasonable, he was given his freedom. He immediately left the country. Henderlite was from Lander where he was known as a law-abiding citizen and his friends claimed that Hudson must have provoked the quarrel, but as there was no one to testify in the dead man's favor, his death has gone unavenged.

### BROOKS' LAKE HAUNTED

Approaching the V—V ranch, owned by Bryant B. Brooks, from the west, about eighteen miles from Casper, in the Big Muddy country to the left of the roadside, is a large lake, which is fed from the flood waters from the mountains in the spring time and there are also numerous springs which assist in keeping the body of water well supplied during the dry season of the year. The lake is a natural basin at the foothills of the mountains. Tradition says that this basin, which is about three miles long and more than half a mile in width, was formerly used as a camping ground by the Indians. In the early '90's a man named Carson, who was passing by the lake, came into Casper, and he was very much excited and told a startling story of having seen the ghost of an Indian chief in a phantom-like canoe, paddle from the shore to the middle of the lake, come to a halt and then suddenly disappear as though swallowed up by the waters. Carson said that he was quietly riding his horse along the roadside which borders the lake, when the horse became frightened and plunged forward. He looked toward the lake where the horse was gazing with apparent fear, and there he saw the apparition above described. The Indian chief was arrayed in full warrior regalia and was visible by means of a peculiar phosphorescent lustre which accompanied him.

This was in the "good old days" before the eighteenth constitutional amendment was enacted, and as Carson was a man who did not usually become excited, and as he was on his way to Casper instead of going from the town, where he might have partaken of something that would have been the cause of him "seeing things," and as he was not given to telling fairy tales, many people at the time were of the opinion that the lake was actually haunted, and that the

old chief had appeared, like Hamlet's ghost, who had a tale to unfold of a crime that had been committed in the days of his nature, but as there were no Indians at hand, the nature of the crime was not communicated to the pale face.

But whether or not the lake is or has been haunted, it is a sad fact that a number of white men who have since ventured on the lake with a boat for the purpose of hunting ducks, have been drowned on account of the boat capsizing with no apparent reason.

### "THE DEEP SLEEP"

About three miles west from Alcova, along side of a trail leading off from the main road, on a hillside, is a lone grave, which has been there since the memory of man runneth not, and while graves along the roadside in this part of the country are not uncommon, the headstone on this grave, which is about twelve inches wide and eight inches deep, naturally attracts the attention of the passerby, for scratched on the flat stone is this inscription:

THE DEEP SLEEP  
HE WAS  
CRAZY

No name, no date, nothing to tell who or what he was, or how or when he came to his death. "He was crazy"; that is all. It would seem that the people who dug his grave, buried him and placed the stone at the head of his resting place thought that being crazy was the most important information people would care about who happened to pass that way.

### BASIL (CIMINEAU) LAJEUNESSE AND THE SEMINOE MOUNTAINS

Among the members of John C. Fremont's expeditions to the Rocky mountains in 1842-3-5, was the voyageur Basil (Cimineau) Lajeunesse, a man of sterling worth. He was one of the men who ascended Fremont Peak on August 15, 1842. Early in the expedition, when drought and grasshoppers had swept the country, so that scarce a blade of grass was to be seen, and there was not a buffalo, deer or antelope for food in the whole region, the Ogallallah Indians warned Fremont not to proceed, lest he should starve, and Fremont put it to his men whether they should turn back, but not a man flinched from the undertaking. "We'll eat the mules," said Basil Lajeunesse. They pushed forward, and although they suffered hardships and privations, they did not eat the mules on this expedition, but they

lived on half rations. On the second expedition, in 1843, however, they did eat their mules, as was the fortune of many western travelers in that year and other years to follow. The name Cimineau endures in Wyoming in the Seminoe mountains. The old settlers who remembered Lajeunesse said that the mountains were called Seminoe to perpetuate the name of one of the bravest and truest pioneers of Wyoming. By some of the modern map makers the name of this range of mountains has been corrupted into "Seminole," but there is no "l" used in the spelling, and the correct pronunciation is Seminoe, or Cimineau.

Lajeunesse did not return with Fremont to the states, but took up his abode in the Sweetwater country, where he lived for many years. This pioneer was descended from a numerous family of hunters, trappers and traders. Gabriel Lajeunesse, his uncle, tradition says, was the hero of Longfellow's "Evangeline." Lajeunesse and his brother Francois were familiar with the mountains, streams and valleys in every part of Wyoming. In 1858 he established a trading post on the Overland route above Devil's Gate, about one hundred yards south of where Tom Sun's ranch house is now located. He traded with the Indians and supplied emigrants who passed through the country. His family lived on a ranch where the Ferris postoffice is situated and it was there his children grew up. In 1862 he started to make a trip to Deer Creek for the purpose of trading with the Sioux Indians. With him were two men and fifteen pack animals, loaded with goods. It is said by some that on the way the party was attacked by the Indians and Lajeunesse was killed and all his goods were carried away and his mules were also driven off, but others claim that he was murdered and his goods carried away by the two men who were in his employ. He was married to a Sioux woman and a number of children were born to them. His ending cannot be more appropriately expressed than by quoting the last lines from that sad but beautiful poem of Longfellow's "Evangeline":

"All was ended now, the hope, and the fear,  
     and the sorrow,  
 "All the aching of heart, the restless,  
     unsatisfied longing,  
 "All the dull, deep pain, and constant  
     anguish of patience."

## Thrilling Events of Early Days

### ADVENTURES OF JOHN COLTER

**T**HE first American to enter what is now Wyoming was John Colter, a trapper and adventurer from Saint Louis. He discovered Yellowstone Park in 1807, but he has received but little credit for it, probably because his fellow-trappers considered his accounts as merely the yarns of one of their own kind and it is doubtful whether they believed them. When he told his story to historians and explorers back in Saint Louis, he was not taken seriously. This may have been because his tales had to compete with those of other trappers and adventurers in the thrill of stirring Indian fights and the surpassing grandeur of places visited. Even the scientist, John Bradbury, who knew Colter and wrote of his exploits, failed to investigate Colter's wonderland, Yellowstone Park. H. M. Brackenridge, who had talked with Colter about his travels, spoke in his writings of the low pass across the mountains that Colter had discovered, but ignored entirely the discoveries made at the head of the Yellowstone.

Colter was a private soldier in the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804-6. When the party reached Mandan, about fifty miles above where Bismarck, North Dakota, now stands, on their return from the far northwest, Colter asked for his discharge, saying that he wished to join some trappers who were going back north and west. He received the discharge and, after being outfitted, returned to the wilderness. The party worked together from August, 1806, until the following spring. Again Colter was on his way back to civilization and again he turned back. This time it was in the employ of Manuel Lisa, a Mexican, whom he met at the mouth of the Platte. Lisa hired a large number of trappers, took them to the north and then spread them over the country. The party journeyed to the mouth of the Big Horn. From this point, Lisa sent Colter out to inform the other bands of Indians that he was in their country and wished to trade with them.

With only a pack of thirty pounds, a gun, and some ammunition, Colter set out on his perilous mission. It is probable that he had Indian guides, but he traveled directly from the Wind river to Pierre's Hole, crossing the Wind river and Teton mountains by the Union or Two-gwo-tee passes. After traveling 500 miles, he found

the Crows. While he was with them, they were attacked by a party of Blackfeet and in the fight it was necessary for Colter to ally himself with the Crows. The Blackfeet were defeated, but not before they had discerned the presence of a white man among their opponents. Colter received a wound in the leg in this fight, but it did not hinder his travels and he went back to Lisa's fort, a trip of several hundred miles, without any assistance whatever. He was alone, having parted from his friends, the Crows, who did not wish to remain in the country long enough to suffer retaliations at the hands of the Blackfeet. Colter afterwards described this trip to General Clark, who traced it on his map and named it "Colter's Route in 1807." His course was as directly northeast as the country would permit. He cut through the dense pine forests that cover the northern Tetons and trailed diagonally across what is now Yellowstone Park. Chittenden<sup>1</sup> says, "This very remarkable achievement — remarkable in its unexpected results in geographical discovery — deserves to be classed among the most celebrated performances in the history of American exploration. Colter was the first explorer of the valley of the Big Horn river; the first to cross the passes at the head of Wind river and see the headwaters of the Colorado of the West; the first to see the Teton mountains, Jackson Hole, Pierre's Hole, and the sources of the Snake (Green) river; and most important of all, the first to pass through that singular region which has since become known throughout the world as the Yellowstone Wonderland. He also saw the immense tar spring at the forks of the Stinkingwater river, a spot which came to bear the name of 'Colter's Hell.'"

It would seem that by this time, Colter had had enough adventure for one man's life time, but a still more thrilling episode was waiting for him. The next spring (1808), he went to the Three Forks of the Missouri to trap accompanied by a man named Potts, who had been with him on the Lewis and Clark expedition. One day while Colter and Potts were working with their traps, a band of Indians came upon them. At first the Indians were not inclined to be hostile, but in a few minutes they became involved in an altercation which resulted in a fight in which Potts was killed and Colter taken prisoner. Bradbury<sup>2</sup> relates that he saw Colter in May, 1810, and received a first-hand account of this wild adventure:

"This man came to Saint Louis in May, 1810, in a small canoe, from the headwaters of the Missouri, a distance of three thousand miles, which he traversed in thirty days. I saw him on his arrival, and received from him an account of his adventures after he had

<sup>1</sup>"The History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West."

<sup>2</sup>"Travels in North America."



separated from Lewis and Clark's party; one of these, from its singularity, I shall relate. On the arrival of the party at the headwaters of the Missouri, Colter, observing an appearance of abundance of beaver there, got permission to remain and hunt for some time, which he did in company with a man by the name of Dixon, who had traversed the immense tract of country from Saint Louis to the headwaters of the Missouri alone.

"Soon after he separated from Dixon, and trapped in company with a hunter named Potts; and aware of the hostility of the Black-foot Indians, one of whom had been killed by Lewis, they set their traps at night, and took them up early in the morning, remaining concealed during the day. They were examining their traps early one morning, in a creek about six miles from that branch of the Missouri called Jefferson's Fork, and were ascending in a canoe, when they suddenly heard a great noise, resembling the trampling of animals; but they could not ascertain the fact, as the high, perpendicular banks on each side of the river impeded their view. Colter immediately pronounced it to be occasioned by Indians, and advised an instant retreat; but was accused of cowardice by Potts, who insisted that the noise was caused by buffaloes, and they proceeded on. In a few minutes afterwards their doubts were removed by a party of Indians making their appearance on both sides of the creek, to the number of five or six hundred, who beckoned them to come ashore. As retreat was now impossible, Colter turned the head of the canoe to the shore; and at the moment of its touching, an Indian seized the rifle belonging to Potts; but Colter, who was a remarkably strong man, immediately retook it, and handed it to Potts, who remained in the canoe, and on receiving it pushed off into the river. He had scarcely quitted the shore when an arrow was shot at him, and he cried out, 'Colter, I am wounded.' Colter remonstrated with him on the folly of attempting to escape, and urged him to come ashore. Instead of complying, he instantly leveled his rifle at an Indian, and shot him dead on the spot. This conduct, situated as he was, may appear to have been an act of madness; but it was doubtless the effect of sudden and sound reasoning; for if taken alive, he must have expected to be tortured to death, according to their custom. He was instantly pierced with arrows so numerous that, to use the language of Colter, 'he was made a riddle of.'

"They now seized Colter, stripped him entirely naked, and began to consult on the manner in which he should be put to death. They were first inclined to set him up as a mark to shoot at; but the chief interfered, and seizing him by the shoulder, asked him if he could run fast. Colter, who had been some time amongst the Kee-



kat-sa, or Crow Indians, had in a considerable degree acquired the Blackfoot language, and was also well acquainted with Indian customs. He knew that he had now to run for his life, with the dreadful odds of five or six hundred against him, and those armed Indians; therefore he cunningly replied that he was a very bad runner, although he was considered by the hunters as remarkably swift. The chief now commanded the party to remain stationary, and released him, bidding him to save himself if he could. At that instant the horrid war whoop sounded in the ears of poor Colter, who, urged with the hope of preserving life, ran with a speed at which he was himself surprised. He proceeded toward the Jefferson Fork, having to traverse a plain six miles in breadth, abounding with prickly pear, on which he was every instant treading with his naked feet. He ran nearly half way across the plain before he ventured to look over his shoulder, when he perceived that the Indians were very much scattered, and that he had gained ground to a considerable distance from the main body; but one Indian, who carried a spear, was much before all the rest, and not more than a hundred yards from him. A faint gleam of hope now cheered the heart of Colter; he derived confidence from the belief that escape was within the bounds of possibility; but that confidence was nearly fatal to him, for he exerted himself to such a degree that the blood gushed from his nostrils, and soon almost covered the fore part of his body.

“He had now arrived within a mile of the river, when he distinctly heard the appalling sound of footsteps behind him, and every instant expected to feel the spear of his pursuer. Again he turned his head, and saw the savage not twenty yards from him. Determined if possible to avoid the expected blow, he suddenly stopped, turned round, and spread out his arms. The Indian, surprised by the suddenness of the action, and perhaps of the bloody appearance of Colter, also attempted to stop; but exhausted with running, he fell whilst endeavoring to throw his spear, which stuck in the ground and broke in his hand. Colter instantly snatched up the pointed part, with which he pinned him to the earth, and then continued his flight. The foremost of the Indians, on arriving at the place, stopped till others came up to join them, when they set up a hideous yell. Every moment of this time was improved by Colter, who, although fainting and exhausted, succeeded in gaining the skirting of the cottonwood trees, on the borders of the fork, through which he ran and plunged into the river. Fortunately for him, a little below this place there was an island, against the upper point of which a raft of drift timber had lodged. He dived under the raft, and after several efforts, got his head above water amongst the trunks of trees, covered

over with smaller wood to the depth of several feet. Scarcely had he secured himself when the Indians arrived on the river, screeching and yelling, as Colter expressed it, 'like so many devils.' They were frequently on the raft during the day, and were seen through the chinks by Colter, who was congratulating himself on his escape, until the idea arose that they might set the raft on fire.

"In horrible suspense he remained until night, when hearing no more of the Indians, he dived from under the raft, and swam silently down the river to a considerable distance, when he landed, and traveled all night. Although happy in having escaped from the Indians, his situation was still dreadful; he was completely naked, under a burning sun; the soles of his feet were entirely filled with the thorns of the prickly pear; he was hungry, and had no means of killing game, although he saw abundance around him, and was at least seven days' journey from Lisa's fort, on the Big Horn branch of the Roche Jaune river. These were circumstances under which almost any man but an American hunter would have despaired. He arrived at the fort in seven days, having subsisted on a root much esteemed by the Indians of the Missouri, now known by naturalists as *psoralea esculenta*."

Colter remained in this part of the country for another year trapping and trading with the Indians. He returned to Saint Louis in May, 1810, and in 1811 was married and gave up his wandering habits. Historians have not traced his life further and it is supposed his later life was spent quietly in the Missouri valley.

It is to be deplored that this resourceful and courageous man was not sent out with the proper scientific equipment to give authenticity to his discoveries. Had he been given the proper backing, he would now rank with Lewis and Clark, Zebulon Pike, and John C. Fremont. It is to be hoped that sometime a monument will be erected to his memory in Yellowstone Park.

## The Battle of Platte Bridge

**I**N the summer of 1865, those who were traveling across the western plains found that their journey was a hard one, not only on account of the hot, dry winds and the wide stretches of sandy and rocky desolation, but on account of the hostilities of the Indians. Almost every station along the Trail was raided and the Indians made their presence felt all along the telegraph line, which was guarded by troops in small detachments. About the middle of July there was a noticeable movement of the Indians east from the Sweetwater valley and more of them were traveling west from Fort Laramie.

Platte Bridge was about one and one-half miles above the site of Casper and was used as a crossing by emigrants bound for California and Oregon over the Trail. A post had been established there not only to care for the telegraph line, but to protect the travelers from the periodical outbreaks of the Indians. It was nearly sixty miles east of Sweetwater and over a hundred miles west of Fort Laramie, and by the 24th of July the Indians had collected in large numbers across the river from the post. Three or four hundred of them came over the river on the 25th and a fight ensued in which a Cheyenne chief was killed and scalped, and on the 26th occurred a desperate and bloody battle in which Caspar W. Collins was killed. Collins was not attached to the fort, but was returning to his station at Sweetwater from Fort Laramie where he had just been commissioned a first lieutenant.

Major Anderson, in command of the station, was organizing a party to go out to bring in a wagon train bound for the fort from Sweetwater and Lieutenant Collins asked to be allowed to lead the party. He was only a boy and the men at the fort tried to dissuade him from going, but he was finally permitted to go. This was courage, but before the day was done he distinguished himself by an act of rare heroism which cost his life. When the little rescue party had gone a short way from the fort, they found that there were hundreds of Indians waiting for them. After putting up a game resistance, they tried to return to the fort. Lieutenant Collins saw one of his men shot from his horse and went to pick him up. This action drew the fire of the Indians and the attack frightened his horse so that it shied and ran. When they found the poor boy's body the next day, it contained

twenty-four arrows. Besides, his mouth had been burned by powder, which was one of the brutalities often inflicted by the noble redskins upon their victims.

On November 21, 1865, Major-General Pope named the post "Fort Caspar" in an order as follows:

"The military post situated at Platte Bridge, between Deer and Rock creeks, on the Platte river, will be hereafter known as Fort Caspar, in honor of Lieutenant Caspar Collins, 11th Ohio Cavalry, who lost his life while gallantly attacking a superior force of Indians at that place."

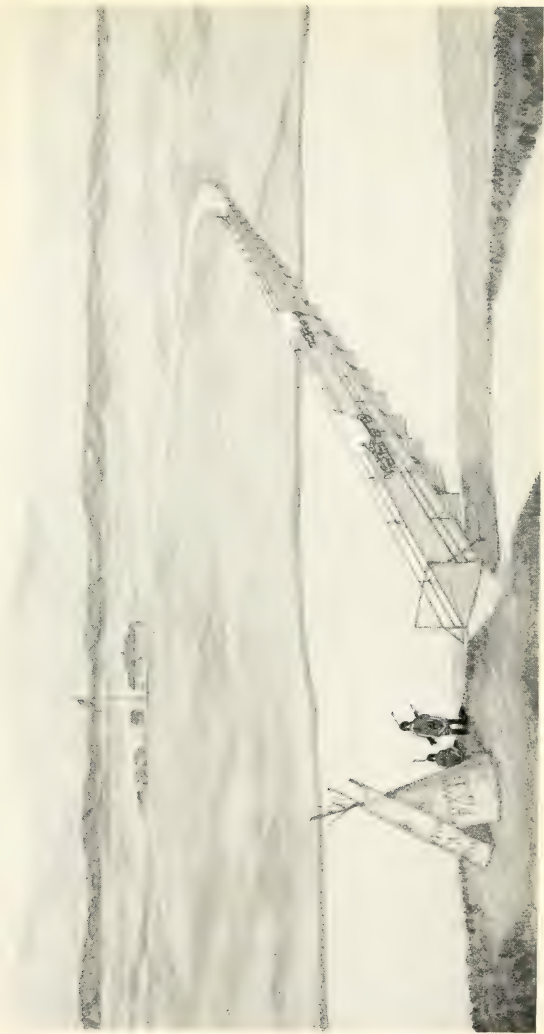
Caspar W. Collins was born at Hillsboro, Ohio, September 30, 1844. He was the son of Lieutenant-Colonel William O. Collins of the 11th Ohio Cavalry. Fort Collins, Colorado, was named in his honor. Caspar moved with his father to Wyoming in 1862, his father being assigned to the station at Fort Laramie.

Old Fort Caspar was abandoned on October 19, 1867.

Colonel W. W. Denison, adjutant-general of the state of Kansas for many years, and a private in the ranks of Company I, 11th Kansas Cavalry, was stationed at Platte River Bridge in July, 1865, when the battle of Platte Bridge was fought. Colonel Denison visited Caspar in September, 1918, and while here gave the following version of the battle, which was taken from the diary of Lieutenant Y. Drew, also of the 11th Kansas Cavalry:

"Old Platte Bridge military post was located on the south side of the North Platte river, about 130 miles west of Fort Laramie. The station was a stockade, inside of which were accommodations for a garrison of about 100 men. About fifty rods northwest from the station was the bridge, which was about 600 feet long. Nearly one-half mile west of the bridge, on the north side of the river, there was a growth of willows, forming quite a screen. Nearly the same distance east, on the north side of the river, a deep gulch came down from the north to the river. After crossing the bridge the road takes a northwest course over the bottom land up to the bluff, along the edge of which it runs for a mile or two in plain sight of the river and station. The telegraph line runs along on the side of the road. The country north of the road is covered with sand hills and deep ravines. At the time of the attack the place was garrisoned by Company I, of the 11th Kansas cavalry, two men of the 11th Ohio, and about twelve of the United States Infantry—rebel prisoners who enlisted in the United States service to fight Indians in preference to staying in the military prisons. The headquarters of the 11th Kansas Regiment were also at the station, making about 110 men, all under the command of Major M. Anderson of the 11th Kansas. Of these about seventy or eighty had guns, the rest being armed with revolvers only. Company I was armed with the Smith breech loading carbines. The 11th Ohio boys had the Spencer repeating rifle, and the United States infantry—'Galvanized Troops,' as the boys called them, had the Springfield musket.

"Just after dinner on the 25th of July, some one called out 'Indians, Indians!' and all hands seizing their arms, ran out to see where they were, their number, etc. On the north side of the river about fifteen or twenty Indians on horseback were moving leisurely along. In a few minutes about a dozen men were mounted and crossing the bridge, commenced skirmishing with the enemy. As fast as our men moved on, the Indians fell back, until our men had gone about three miles from the bridge. All this time the Indians were increasing in numbers until there were about



OLD FORT CASPAR AND PLATTE BRIDGE, BURNED BY INDIANS, 1867





forty in plain sight. Our boys had been using their carbines to good effect, and had struck several Indians on their ponies, without any particular loss or damage on our side. At this time an order was received from the station for the men to come back, as the Indians were showing themselves on the south side of the river, east of the station. As our men fell back toward the bridge, Indians kept coming out of the ravine until there were about fifty in sight, showing that their maneuvering had been for the purpose of luring our men out as far away from all support as possible then to wipe them out by superior numbers. Our men reached the station without any loss. On the south side of the river the boys were having about the same experience as their comrades on the north side, the Indians falling back as they were charged and gradually increasing in numbers. In one of their charges the boys shot one of the chiefs of the Cheyennes through the bowels. He threw his arms over the neck of his pony, which wheeled to the left and went off into a thicket of brush, where the chief fell off. At this time the Indians charged desperately on our men to drive them back. But at this juncture a reinforcement of about a dozen came from the station, and the Indians were repulsed. Their intention had been to hold our men back long enough to give them an opportunity to carry off their fallen chief. Two of the boys rode into the brush to find the chief, and found him lying apparently dead. One man jumped off his horse and stabbed him about the heart. He did not give the least sign of life. Then he commenced to scalp him. As soon as the knife touched his head the Indian commenced to beg, when another man shot him through the brain. The Indian belief is that if a warrior loses his scalp he cannot go to the 'Happy Hunting Grounds.' They will lose their lives without the least sign of feeling, but they want to save their scalps. The boys took the chief's arms and a buckskin jacket that he had on. The jacket was fringed with about thirty-five different kinds of hair—white men's, women's, children's, Indians' and squaws—which he had taken at different times in his battles and forages.

"A word right here in regard to the action of the men in stabbing and shooting the wounded Indians. About ten days before this the Indians had captured one of our men and had tortured and mangled him in a horrible manner. Our boys swore that if ever they got hold of an Indian they would cut him all to pieces, and they did as stated.

"The fighting on the 25th of July 1865, at Platte Bridge had resulted in the killing and wounding of several of the Indians, with but very little damage on our side. Several of our men had received slight wounds, but every one reported for duty on the return to the stockade that evening, and all hands felt elated over the action.

"On making an inspection that evening of the arms and ammunition it was found that there were less than twenty rounds to the man, for the Smith carbines, and but very little more for the other arms. Owing to the oversight or negligence of some one whose business it was to attend to the ordnance supplies, there had not been any cartridges for the Smith carbines sent out on the plains, only what the 11th Kansas Cavalry had on hand at the time of their departure from Fort Riley, in the preceding winter. Requisitions had been made on the ordnance officials at Fort Laramie for a supply without success, and I presume he sent our requisition to Fort Leavenworth, for a few days before we had been notified by telegraph that supplies had been received, and that we send an escort to Fort Laramie with a requisition and we would be provided for, and at this time Sergeant H. Todd, Corporal W. H. Smith, with some others were on the way from Fort Laramie with commissary and ordnance supplies. But that did not help us in the present emergency. Some of the boys commenced running bullets and making cartridges, Private James E. Bush being one I remember as being very proficient in that business.

"During the night an alarm was given by the sound of horses crossing the bridge, but on being challenged we were agreeably surprised to find that it was caused by five or six of Company G, 11th Ohio Cavalry, under the command of Lieutenant Bretney of the same company from Sweetwater station, about fifty miles west of Platte Bridge. They reported leaving Sweetwater on the preceding morning in company with three wagons and twenty-five men of the 11th Kansas under command of Sergeant Custard of Company H. The train with its escort had halted about eighteen or twenty miles from the bridge and proposed coming as soon as possible the next day. They had seen

no signs of Indians either while with the train or since leaving it, and were surprised to find that they had not been attacked after they heard about the fighting during the afternoon.

"The next morning as soon as we could distinguish objects we scanned the surrounding country to see if we could find any of our last evening's opponents. We did not make out any on our side of the river, but on the north side there were some moving about and others squatted on the hills. Altogether there seemed to be about ninety in sight, just about the number we had been fighting the day before. They looked as though they were out of a job and did not know just where to find one. We breakfasted, and then Major Anderson ordered Lieutenant Collins, of the 11th Ohio Cavalry to take command of a detail of twenty-five men and reinforce the train so as to prevent their being surprised. Lieutenant Collins had been at Fort Laramie and was on his way back to his command at Sweetwater, and had reached the Platte bridge about three days before with an escort of four or five men from Company K, 11th Kansas Cavalry, from Deer Creek, the next station east of us about thirty miles. Lieutenant Collins had been out on the plains with his regiment two or three years. He was a brave young fellow and was considered to be pretty well posted in the Indian tactics.

"The detail moved out in fine spirits, crossed the bridge and then rode leisurely over the bottom land up on the bluff. Quite a number of the boys had gone on foot over the bridge at the same time with the detail, and others were straggling over. Among others Lieutenant Bretney of the 11th Ohio with about a dozen men had gone straight north up on the bluff and were waiting to see what action the Indians would take with the detail. Strict orders had been given by Major Anderson that not a shot was to be fired by our men without it was actually necessary, on account of the scarcity of ammunition. On reaching the top of the bluff two Indians were seen by the detail up the telegraph poles a little over a quarter of a mile away cutting the telegraph wire. As soon as they saw our men they slid down the poles, mounted their ponies, and started for the back country as fast as their ponies would take them. Their ponies appeared to be very lame and they did not make much headway. It looked like a soft snap to take them in and Lieutenant Collins ordered the boys to go for them before the Indians could reach their friends. This charge of course took them off the road and away from the sight of the river. The instant the last man had disappeared from view behind the screen of willows west of the bridge about 400 Cheyennes on horseback appeared and with loud yells charged over the bottom lands, and up the bluff in the direction in which our men had gone. The instant these Indians reached the top of the bluff, from behind every sandhill and out of every hollow Indians appeared and all with the one object of charging on the detail and annihilating them before they could get back to the bridge and friends. As soon as the detail realized the situation they retraced their steps with all possible speed, but it was not more than a couple of minutes before the Indians were all around them as thick as bees. In fact, so many of them were on all sides that they did not dare to use their firearms or bows and arrows for fear of shooting their own men, but they used their lances, tomahawks and sabers, and even tried to pull the boys off their horses by main force. The boys kept together in two ranks, discharging their carbines with deadly effect into the crowd on right and left; then, not having time to reload, took their revolvers and kept up the shooting. A boy of about seventeen belonging to Company I of the 11th Kansas, had what we called a "nuley" or "pepper box" revolver, the hammer being on the lower side of the weapon, and by pulling on the trigger, the hammer would raise, the piece revolve to the next charge and the hammer fall on the cap and discharge it. A big Indian struck the boy on the head with his spear, trying to stun him, but the horses were moving so rapidly it did not hurt him much. The boy pointed his "pepper box" at the Indian; the Indian with a sardonic grin on his swarthy features said "Ugh! no good!" and tried to grab the boy's arm and pull him off, but he reckoned without his host. Just at that instant the revolver went off and shot Mr. Indian through the breast. His grin changed to a look of painful astonishment as he fell forward upon his pony's neck and wheeled out of the fight.

"It did not take long for the detail to reach the edge of the bluff and as soon as they got there the Indians on their right and left wheeled out of the way and from the

rear they poured out such a volley from their guns and revolvers that for a little while it reminded me of Wilson Creek, Missouri, or Prairie Grove, Arkansas, battlefield. But our boys were going rapidly down hill, and the Indians in their excitement fired so high that they hurt our men but very little, but did considerable harm to a lot of Sioux Indians who were charging to take up the bridge. Lieutenant Caspar W. Collins, Adam Culp, George W. McDonald, Sebastian Nehring, and George Camp were killed in this fight and nearly all the balance were more or less wounded, though none mortally. The escape of any was almost miraculous.

"As soon as the Cheyennes came out of their ambush all the men on or near the bridge had run as fast as they could to help their comrades that they knew would soon be striving to get back to the station. They got about half way over the bottom land toward the hill, and the Indians seeing the footmen coming were deterred from pursuing them any further.

"Lieutenant Bretney and the party with him, as soon as they saw the Cheyennes charge, turned from the bluff and ran to the bridge as fast as they could and they were just in time. From the deep gulch east of the bridge about 500 Sioux had been in ambush and as soon as the Cheyennes reached the top of the bluff they came charging out to take the bridge, but seeing Bretney with the men that were with him, and some reinforcements that came over the bridge pouring in the shots so lively from their carbines and revolvers and the other Indians, in firing so high when shooting at our men coming over the bluff, had the Sioux in exact range and hit a good many, making it so hot for them that they could not stand the pressure, but turned tail and fell back to the gulch again, just about as fast as they came out of it. If these Sioux Indians had succeeded in their object of taking the bridge, they would probably have killed the balance of Collins' party and fifteen or twenty others who were on foot on the bottom land going to their relief, and then they very likely would have taken the station also.

"As soon as the Sioux were driven back from the bridge, there was a cessation of the fighting, all of our men who were unhurt gathering at or near the bridge to defend it, if the Indians should make any further attempt to take it, the wounded men going over to the station to have their wounds dressed and such other care as they required.

"The Indians were moving about on the bluff where the fighting had been going on with the lieutenant's party, torturing our men who had fallen, if there were any life left in them, and if dead, scalping and mangling their bodies in every conceivable manner. One of our men had fallen on the edge of the bluff just as the boys were coming down the hill, fully a thousand yards away from the bridge. An Indian rode up to his body and commenced shooting arrows into him. After firing four or five times, the Indian dismounted and took his tomahawk and commenced to hack him with it. The boys at the bridge were very much excited over it and some of them wanted to rush up there to save the body from further mutilation, but as under the circumstances that would have resulted in the killing and wounding of several more of our men without doing us any good, they were forbidden to undertake it. One of the boys put his gun to his shoulder and fired at the Indian. The report did not seem to disturb his equanimity in the least. Hank Lord said: "I believe I will try a whack at him," and elevating the hind sight of his carbine to 1,000 yards, took deliberate aim and fired. The Indian had his hatchet raised at the time and was just about ready to strike it into the head of the dead soldier, but the bullet was too quick for him, and struck him in some vital part, for the hatchet dropped from his hand and he fell over on the ground. Pretty soon he managed to stagger to his feet again and succeeded in getting onto his pony and started away, but he was badly hurt and swayed from side to side on his horse and was just about to fall off again, when two other Indians noticing his condition rode up, one on each side, and supported him off the field.

"Very soon after this we heard a good deal of loud talking among the Indians who were gathered together in a large body on the bluff, about three-fourths of a mile from us. They seemed very much excited and we expected they were making arrangements to make another charge on the bridge, and we prepared ourselves for the onset, feeling very anxious as to what the result would be, but determined if we should be overcome by the overwhelming numbers of the enemy, to sell our lives as dearly as possible.

"At this time a half-breed Snake Indian, who lived in a tepee, or tent, between the station and the bridge, and who had crawled up to the bluff to find out what the tribes were, their numbers, etc., returned and reported that the Sioux and Cheyennes were having a big quarrel among themselves, the Cheyennes were charging the Sioux with being great cowards for not taking the bridge when they attempted it, and thus carrying out the part of the program assigned to them, and the Sioux, retaliating on the Cheyennes, by charging them with shooting a great many of their warriors when they fired down the hill at Lieutenant Collins' retreating party. The half-breed stated that it might have the effect of breaking up the whole party, as each tribe declared they would not coalesce with the other in the future, and in fact were just about ready to turn their weapons upon each other. The half-breed's report relieved our anxiety, and we would have been very glad to have seen them commence hostilities against each other. It would have been a clear case of "dog eat dog," and we would have agreed to act in an impartial manner and not aid either side, if they had consulted us in regard to it.

"For about an hour there were no new developments, except that the Indians by one means or another endeavored to decoy some of us away from the bridge. One Indian on horseback moved along a little beyond the edge of the bluff, leading the horse Lieutenant Collins had ridden. The gray acted very unwilling to be led and pulled back. Two other Indians rode up to him and commenced to whip him but he only curved about, and did not get ahead very fast. Some of the boys took a shot at the Indians, but the instant the flash from the gun was seen, the Indians would lean over on the opposite side of their horses and all that could be seen was the hand grasping the mane, and the foot over the back. The instant the shot had passed by, the Indians would straighten up again. The shots struck the horses once or twice, but we had no ammunition to spare for that kind of business, and orders were given to cease firing except in case of an attack. As soon as the Indians found they could not draw us out that way, they commenced to call us all the bad names they could think of, using language they had picked up from among the whites previous to the breaking out of the war, or had learned from the renegade whites among them.

"Just at this time one of the boys sang out: "There comes the train," and sure enough, there it was in sight coming over the hill about four miles from the station.

"The Indians had perceived it about the same time and in a minute every one of them was urging his pony at its fastest toward the devoted train. There was a small howitzer at the station and a few rounds of ammunition for it. The fuse was cut for for about three seconds and the piece aimed at the largest body of Indians and discharged, but the shell had not left the piece more than one second before it exploded in the air, doing no damage to any one. Another shell was put in with a longer fuse, but it did not make any difference, as it exploded about the same as did the other. All the good that was accomplished by discharging the howitzer was to warn the party with the train that there was trouble ahead, and give them a chance to prepare for it. We noticed that the train moved a good deal faster for a few minutes, but the advance of the Indians soon appeared. Sergeant Custard had sent five of his escort about a fourth of a mile ahead of the rest as an advance guard. Quite a body of the Indians came suddenly up a ravine between the advance and the main party. Corporal James Shrader, in charge of the advance, at first attempted to get back to the train, but seeing the large force he had to contend with and more coming every second, ordered his men to turn to the right and gallop as fast as possible to the river which was about one-fourth of a mile south of them. Some of the Indians pursued. But the boys fought them back to the best of their ability. Just as they reached the river one of the soldiers, Edwin Summers, fell, shot through the heart. The remainder of the party plunged into the river. When they got about four rods from the other side another of the soldiers, James Ballew, was shot and fell off his horse into the river. The others got safely across and headed towards the station. Quite a number of Indians had been concealed on the south side of the river, probably in ambush waiting for some party to go out on that side to reconnoiter, or else to seize a favorable moment and rush in and surprise the station, but as soon as the train appeared they came out of their holes and made for the train, most of them crossing the river below the station, but fifteen or twenty going south of the station towards the train. When the three men



escaping from the river had got about half way to the station they struck the advance of the Indians on the south side. There were only four or five of them and the boys shot two before the others came in sight, and then the boys turning their horses towards the mountains in the southeast rode as rapidly as possible until they came to a deep ravine with some brush on the banks. As soon as they reached that they left their horses and then wound their way among the brush down the ravine which ran in the direction of the station. The Indians went toward the train, where, I presume, they thought there would be some plunder to be divided. After the three boys had worked down the ravine about a half a mile they stopped to reconnoiter a little, the corporal crawling up to the edge of the ravine and raising his head to look out on the surrounding country. Just the instant his head was exposed a bullet ploughed along the top of his head just close enough to stun him for a minute or two. He dropped and the other boys pulled him back and bathed his head and soon restored him to consciousness. They concluded to move a little farther down the ravine and then reconnoiter again. The next time they looked out they could not see any Indians on that side of the river except two or three who were standing on as many points of ground, about three-fourths a mile away, apparently on guard. They then looked on the north side and about a half mile was another deep ravine that ran down to the river within half a mile of the station. They concluded to make a run for the station, and it did not take them long to reach the ravine. No more Indians had appeared in sight and they began to feel safe. While they were running to the last ravine some of us had noticed them, and the instant we realized what it meant about fifteen or twenty of us started on foot to meet them and help them if necessary. Just about the same time fifteen or twenty Indians came out of the ravine that the boys had been concealed in first and came charging out towards the ravine that the boys had gone into. We all ran as fast as we could calling to the boys to work down the ravine toward us as fast as possible. Pretty soon the boys came out of the ravine and ran as fast as possible to us. They had got just about half way when the Indians made their appearance. But we were close enough to reach them with our guns, and after having fired a few shots they fell back toward the train. The three men proved to be a corporal and two privates, James Shrader, Bryam Swaim, and Henry C. Smith, from Company D, 11th Kansas Cavalry, and they were all that escaped from the train, and it was a very narrow chance for them. All that saved them was the desire of the Indians to be at the plundering of the train and their good sense in abandoning their horses at the time they did.

"At the time the party sallied from the station to assist the three men escaping from the train about a dozen mounted men started from the station and crossed the bridge and went on to the bluff where the fight had been with Collins' party, to bring in the bodies of the fallen soldiers. They found all the bodies mangled in a shocking manner, the "noble redmen" taking a fiendish delight in mutilating the dead bodies of their fallen foes in a way too horrible to describe. Near one of the bodies a piece of paper was lying, which one of the men picked up. From its appearance it was a page torn out of a diary or account book. It was written about as follows: 'I was taken prisoner about seven months ago from Labonte station. You must be careful or you will all be killed. There are between 3,000 and 4,000 Indians here and about another thousand are expected here in a day or two. They belong to the Cheyennes, Sioux, and Arapahoes, with a few Comanches and Blackfeet. You killed one of the principal chiefs of the Cheyennes yesterday, and they swear they will have a terrible revenge on you for it. Their intention is to clean out all the stations on this road and then go on to Fort Collins road and clean that out. I shall escape them if I can.'

"I do not remember the name signed to it, but it was evidently some person that was with the Indians and had a friendly feeling toward us. Some of the 11th Ohio men thought it was a man that had belonged to one of the companies of the 11th Ohio and was supposed to have deserted at the time he mentioned from Labonte station. A great many of the 11th Ohio Cavalry had been recruited from the rebel soldiers that had gone into Ohio on the celebrated 'Morgan raid,' and after their capture preferred enlisting in the United States service to fight Indians in the place of remaining in the military prisons of the North until the war should end or until they would be exchanged. Most of them made good, faithful soldiers; but some of them were

exceptionally hard cases and deserted and joined the Indians and helped them in their warfare with the whites, and what the Indians didn't know about devilment these renegades taught them.

"From the roof of the station and with the aid of a large spy glass, we had a pretty good view of what was going on at the train. The train had stopped on a side hill and with three wagons they had formed three sides of a square with one front facing up the hill to the north, one facing east and one south. The west side was open. The first Indians that came on to the scene of action charged right on to the train, but were repulsed, and as more of them arrived they again made a charge, but were again driven back. After this for a long time there did not seem to be much action going on; and every once in a while we would see a puff of smoke from the wagons or from the side hill below the wagons which showed that the fight was still going on, but we could not tell with what result, though we noticed that the puffs of smoke from the hillside on the south were getting closer and closer, and we felt that the end could not be far off. Never, never in all our services as soldiers had we ever experienced anything like this before. To know that about twenty of our comrades, with whom for nearly three years we had been soldiering in the South, were now within two and a half miles of us, surrounded by an overwhelming number of enemies, determined on their destruction, and were not able to do anything for their relief. Some of us went to Major Anderson and requested that about forty or fifty of us might be allowed to volunteer and go out on foot to attempt their rescue, but the major, while feeling deeply for the gallant fellows that were making such a good fight against the tremendous odds opposed to them, yet realizing how futile would have been our attempt for their relief, and the probability that all who started out would have shared the same fate as those with the train, and that then the garrison would have been so weakened that after our destruction it would have been an easy matter for the Indians to have taken the station and massacred all that were left. The major positively refused to allow any to go. At that time we thought the major was too cautious but since then, knowing what the Indians did with two hundred or more infantry that were slaughtered a year or two after this at Fort Fetterman, and more recently by the massacre of the gallant General Custer and his brave men at the battle of Little Big Horn, we were satisfied that the major's decision was a wise one, and that by it any of us are left to tell the tale.

"About three o'clock p. m., the major ordered a party of twenty mounted men under Lieutenant Walker to proceed about two miles east of the station to repair the telegraph wire that was cut at that point, so that we could telegraph to Deer Creek and other stations below, the situation, and have them send us reinforcements and ammunition to enable us to cope with the Indians. At the same time that Walker's party went out, the ten or twelve United States Infantry, or Galvanized Troops, under the command of their officer, were to go out about one-half mile from the station to support the cavalry under Walker on their return to the station, if the Indians should develop any force that would interfere with carrying out the orders from fixing the telegraph. A system of signals had been arranged by which Lieutenant Walker was to be notified if the Indians from the west were moving back from the train to interfere with his carrying out of his orders. The flag at the station was to be waved if the Indians were moving toward him, and as soon as it was realized that enough of them were on the way to preclude all possibility of success, the howitzer was to be fired, and at that Lieutenant Walker was to bring his command back to the supports as quick as possible, and they were all to fall back to the station. Walker arrived at the break in the telegraph wire and then sent four men, Sergeant McDougal and Privates Porter, Hilty and Chappel, all of Company I, 11th Kansas out about one-fourth of a mile farther east to watch for the Indians. The rest went to work joining the wire, which was broken in several places. Very soon after Walker's command left the station it was noticed that a large number of the Indians, who were on horseback between the station and the train had commenced moving north, and it was not a great while before they were spied crossing the divide about a mile northeast of the station. We knew then that these Indians had noticed the party of soldiers leaving the station and were on the way to intercept them. The signal was given with the flag, and as soon as the signal man was satisfied enough of the Indians had passed to make



it certain it would be no use to delay any longer, the Howitzer was fired as the signal for the party to come in.

"As soon as the report was heard, the men dropped their wires mounted their horses, and then Walker, without waiting for the four men who were thrown out in advance, ordered them in as fast as possible. The captain of the 'Galvanized troops' did not wait until the cavalry came up, but ordered his men back instanter. Some of Company I boys had gone out on foot nearly to where the 'Galvanized troops' had been stationed. As soon as they heard the howitzer they ran on to where the relief had been stationed, and as they passed by the 'Galvanized troops' they cursed the captain for a coward for leaving his post before the cavalry had got up to him. He paid no attention, but pushed on to the station, though some of his men turned back to help the others. The Cavalry came on until they reached the boys on foot and then the most of them turned to let the four men behind come up, though Lieutenant Walker's horse had got under such headway that it did not stop until it had carried him safely into the station, without his firing a shot from his revolver.

"About fifteen of the Indians had appeared out of a ravine and charged on the four men from the north side of the river. The men discharged their carbines and then commenced to unload their revolvers. They did not notice anything on the south. Several Indians came out of a ravine on the south close by them, and before they were observed one of them drove a spear through Porter's heart and he fell dead from his horse. Another one gave Hilty a stab with a spear through the lungs and then drew it out as Hilty fell forward on his horse's neck, the Indian moved ahead. His leg struck McDougal as he went by him, but he was so close he could not stab him until he drew his spear back. McDougal turned his head, and, seeing it was an Indian, brought his hand around with the revolver in it, pressed the weapon against the Indian's body and pulled his trigger. The Indian fell off his horse shot through the heart. It was the last shot McDougal had in his revolver, but it saved his life. By this time the boys on foot began to reach the Indians with their carbines, and as the Indians who had got into the light were comparatively few in numbers, they did not press any closer. Hilty clung to his horse until it carried him into the station, where he was taken care of. The rest of the men were then ordered back to the station.

"Just about the time Lieutenant Walker's party had started from the station, we noticed that the firing had ceased at the train, and very soon a large smoke arose, and we saw that the wagons were burning. We knew then that the fighting was all over, and that the brave men who had so well defended themselves were all dead. They had made a gallant fight for four full hours, but had been overpowered at last.

"The Indians stayed about the place where the train had been until nearly nightfall, and then a great many of them moved back to the bluff north of the river. We expected that during the night they would make some demonstrations against the station, and the guards were doubled and extra vigilance enjoined on them so that they would not be taken unawares. Just after midnight a few of them came prowling around, but the guards were on the alert and fired on them. They responded with a few arrows, but did not make any further demonstrations.

"About 10 o'clock p. m. Major Anderson arranged with the half-breed Snake Indian to go to Deer Creek and report the situation to the commanding officer at the post and then have it telegraphed down the road, also to carry orders for the garrison at Deer Creek to march to our assistance and to bring us a supply of ammunition. During the fight the day before we had captured quite a number of Indian ponies whose riders had been shot off them, and then the ponies had come along with Collins' men into our lines. The half breed selected a pony which he said had belonged to a Sioux chief, and had been noted for its speed and endurance. He started out a little after 10 o'clock p. m., going directly south towards the mountains and after that he intended to take a trail he knew and work to the east until he reached the Deer Creek station. He was successful in his undertaking and he reached his destination safely, and about fifty men of Company K, 11th Kansas Volunteers, with about 5,000 rounds of ammunition, were started for Platte Bridge. The next morning everything appeared about as it was the preceding night. The Indians were in sight on the bluff, though their numbers were less, and we noticed parties of them going off in a northeast direction all the morning, until about noon the last of them disappeared. About 3 o'clock

p. m., we noticed a body of men coming from toward the Deer Creek station, and very soon we recognized them as being soldiers. It proved to be Company K from Deer Creek with the ammunition. We gave them a hearty reception and as soon as they rested a few minutes, they in company with a detachment of Company I started on the trail of the Indians. It was soon ascertained that the Indians were in full retreat and then the command was ordered to go to the place where the fight with the train had been. On arriving there a horrible sight met our gaze. Twenty-one of our dead soldiers were lying on the ground stripped naked, and mangled in every imaginable way. I noticed one poor fellow with a wagon tire across his bowels, and from appearances it had been heated and laid upon him, while still alive, so that the red devils might gloat over the torture they were putting him to, before the breath of life had entirely left his body.

"From the appearance of the rest, I believe he was the only one tortured, and therefore think he was the only one left alive at the time they captured the train. Every one of the men were scalped, but the Indians had left their scalps lying around on the ground, which was a sure sign that their loss had been so heavy that they did not think they had any cause to exult over their victory. We counted about forty trails made by poles fastened to their ponies on which they fix a stretcher, to carry their wounded on. We heard some time after, that during the fighting their loss had been over sixty warriors killed and about 130 badly wounded. The loss on our side was Lieutenant Collins, twenty-seven men killed, eleven or twelve wounded, and one missing. We presume that the missing man, William West, was killed, but we could not find his body. It may be that the Indians took him away to torture him at one of their villages before putting him to death. The command returned to the station and the next morning we went out and buried our fellow heroes in the ground upon which they had so nobly yet unavailingly fought. Most of those who had been killed with the train had belonged to Company H of the 11th Kansas, and it was always considered the best company in the regiment when there was any real fighting to be done, yet up to this time the company had escaped with less casualties than any other company in the regiment. It made it so much harder that after fighting nearly three years against the rebels, then to be ordered out on the plains to fight Indians, and now when the orders were out for our return home to be mustered out, it was sad to have so many of our comrades slaughtered. We have the consolation of knowing that they died with their face to the foe and that in death as well as through their three years' service they sustained the proud reputation, gained by the regiment, of always doing their duty, no matter what odds were pitted against them.

"In about two days more the Sixth Michigan Cavalry came and relieved us at the bridge and we marched for home without further molestation."

The exact spot where the body of Caspar Collins was found cannot be marked, for it is unknown. John C. Friend, when he was here July 5, 1920, said that "the distance from the north end of the bridge to where he was found was variously estimated from two to four miles. So long as the body was recovered the distance and the exact spot were matters of indifference to us at that time. It has been more than fifty years since the battle and the old landmarks are now all gone."

The old abandoned military post, which is now known as Fort Caspar, was first established in the summer of 1858.<sup>1</sup> It was then known as Mormon Ferry. In March, 1859, an order from the Department was given to abandon the post at Platte Bridge, and from this order it is evident that Louis Guinard had built the bridge in the

<sup>1</sup> Record from War Department, quoted in history of the Pioneer monument, in this volume.



MEMBERS OF CASPER CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE FROM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SELECTING SITE FOR MUNICIPAL PARK ON THE  
 GROUNDS WHERE OLD FORT CASPAR WAS LOCATED (NOVEMBER 9, 1922)

*From left to right:* J. G. Jones, J. M. Whisenhunt, J. J. Giblin, W. A. Blackmore (Mayor), J. S. Pettingill, W. W. Keefe, F. S. Knittle  
 (City Engineer), Charles Stafford (C. C. Committee), M. P. Wheeler (C. C. Committee), A. J. Mokler (C. C. Committee and Historian),  
 W. S. Kimball (C. C. Committee), J. S. Mechling, C. R. Peterson.



winter of 1858-9, and the name of the post was accordingly changed. In May, 1862, the post was again occupied by volunteer troops, but, according to Earnest Pope, a soldier stationed here at that time, "it consisted of only a few sod houses. In the summer of 1866 some of the soldiers of Company K, 18th Ohio Infantry, commenced to build the fort from logs which they hauled down from Casper mountain. This mountain was then called the 'Black Hills.' We were paid 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  cents per day extra for our work on the fort. The log trains were heavily guarded, for the Indians were opposed to the fort being built. Three of our men who were guarding the telegraph station at Big Thompson were chased up the Sweetwater by the Indians in January or February, 1867, and although they kept away from the red skins, our men found them frozen to death in the hills back of the Sweetwater."

The name of this post was changed in in November, 1865, from Platte Bridge to Fort Caspar, as stated in the introductory of this sketch. Upon an order from the War Department it was abandoned in October, 1867. The buildings and the bridge were set on fire by the Indians and destroyed in the fall after the post was abandoned. As late as 1898 some of the walls of the old adobe buildings were still standing, but they were afterwards destroyed by the settlers who occupied the land.

Mathew Campfield, a negro barber in Casper, filed on the land for his homestead where old Fort Caspar was located, the description of which is: The southeast quarter of the southwest quarter of section 7, township 33, north, range 79 west of the sixth principal meridian. Patent was issued May 10, 1898. Mr. Campfield died before the patent was issued, but his wife, Fannie Campfield, was given title to the land and she sold it to Antonio K. Feil. Town lots have been platted on forty acres west of where the fort stood, and as it was only reasonable to presume that the location of the fort would soon be platted into town lots, at a luncheon of the Casper Chamber of Commerce, held on October 17, 1922, a committee consisting of A. J. Mokler, W. S. Kimball and M. P. Wheeler, was appointed for the purpose of conferring with the Casper city council and requesting that the city of Casper acquire title to a portion of the land occupied by the old fort and have it fenced and an appropriate marker erected on the spot. This committee waited on the council at a meeting held on the evening of November 8, and after each of the members had addressed the council, upon motion of Councilman W. W. Keefe it was decided by a unanimous vote that the entire body of the city council, together with the city engineer and the members of the committee from the chamber of commerce visit the site of the old

fort on the afternoon of November 9 for the purpose of viewing the ground and deciding upon what portion of it the city should purchase and have fenced and marked. All the members of the council and the committee viewed the site on the date specified, and many relics of the old fort were found, and one of the logs forming the cribbing for one of the piers to the old bridge, with several large hand-forged spikes driven through it, all of which was in a fairly good state of preservation, was unearthed and brought to Casper and will be preserved for Natrona county's historical society. This log had been buried under the silt and sand for more than sixty-three years. The city council will acquire title to about 100 acres of this land, fence and mark the spot where the old fort was located and create a park along the river.

The Platte bridge was located on a portion of land described as the northeast quarter of the southwest quarter of section 7, township 33, north, range 79 west of the sixth principal meridian. This land was homesteaded by Charles M. Hawks, December 21, 1906, who afterwards sold it to the Mills Construction company. Many of the old stone piers on the south side of the river, which supported the bridge, may yet be found among the willows. Across the old bridge, on the north side of the river and to the west was the old battle ground, which has been drenched with the blood of at least sixty brave white men and an unknown number of savage red men.

The citizens of Casper, Natrona county and Wyoming revere the name of Caspar Collins, and on July 5, 1920, a marker was unveiled on the old Oregon Trail, near the spot where he fell. The monument is of gray granite, bearing the inscription:

Unveiled by Fort Caspar  
Chapter D. A. R.  
July 5, 1920

Oregon Trail  
Marked by State of  
Wyoming  
1914

Lieutenant Caspar W. Collins  
Killed by Sioux Indians  
Near this spot  
July 26, 1865

At the unveiling ceremony a vivid account of the event was told by John C. Friend of Rawlins. Mr. Friend was a telegraph operator at Sweetwater station in June, 1865, and was one of a party of thirty sent from that station to Platte Bridge to restring telegraph wires which the Indians had cut. He said in part, "I was with the





EXCAVATING A LOG (NOVEMBER 9, 1922) THAT FORMED A PORTION OF THE CRIBBING FOR ONE OF THE PIERS OF OLD PLATTE BRIDGE. BUILT IN 1858-9.



party which went out next day to bring in the dead. We spread out fan shaped over these hills, and one of the party signaled that they had found him. I didn't see the body. A box was made, lined with blankets and it was brought in and buried on the other side of the river near the station. Later it was shipped back to his home in Ohio."

In the fall of 1899, H. M. Brown was awarded the contract for disinterring, boxing, and delivering to the depot the bodies of the soldiers who were killed in action in 1865 at or near Fort Caspar. There were thirteen bodies disinterred, five were in the Casper cemetery, seven were half a mile west from the site of Fort Caspar and one five miles south of town. The bodies were placed in boxes four feet long, one foot deep and one foot wide, and were shipped to Fort Russell, where they were interred in the soldiers' cemetery. The bodies of the seven soldiers near Fort Caspar and the five in the Casper cemetery which had been previously moved from their original graves on account of the river's changing its course and exposing the remains, were soldiers who lost their lives with Lieutenant Caspar Collins. On a little hill, about two and one-half miles west of Casper, overlooking the famous Caspar Collins battle field, are the seven empty graves. This is all that is left to tell the pathetic story of the massacre of Lieutenant Caspar Collins and his brave command. These graves may be observed by all who chance to pass along the road. At the head and foot of the graves before the bodies were removed, were two rough stones and the mounds were covered with smaller stones of the same kind. This, perhaps, was all that those who buried their comrades could do to mark their last resting places. From generation to generation, the story of this frightful massacre will be handed down, and as Casper grows, and its suburbs extend in that direction, it is hoped that the spot will be fenced and preserved, that our citizens may realize and remember the hardships endured by those who fought and died to protect the emigrants who were passing through this valley on their way to the far west, where populous cities have been builided, where thousands and millions of acres of land have been reclaimed, where vast and wonderful mines of precious metal have been discovered, and where an Empire has been established.

#### INDIANS BURN ROCK RIDGE STATION

Indians went on the war path in this country in the early spring of 1865, and they reaped their greatest harvest of life and property in what is now Natrona county. Emigrants who were caught along

the Trail were killed and their property which could not be used by the savages was burned. Forts were attacked, the soldiers killed and the stock driven away. All along the Trail from the South Pass to Fort Laramie, there was death and destruction. Rock Ridge station, in the Sweetwater country, was one of the first to be attacked and concerning this fight, Lieutenant-Colonel Plumb, whose command was the Eleventh Kansas Cavalry, in his official report to the war department, dated June 1, 1865, from Camp Dodge, which was located several miles above Platte Bridge, says:

"I have the honor to report that on the morning of last Saturday the Indians in considerable force attacked Rock Ridge station and ran off what stock that remained, and soon after cut the telegraph line. No further information was received from there until yesterday, when a messenger arrived from Sweetwater station, bringing intelligence that on Sunday night Lieutenant Collins, Eleventh Ohio Volunteer cavalry, with two men, started from Three Crossings for Rock Ridge, and, arriving within a short distance, discovered that the station was in flames. Not considering it prudent to venture farther, he returned to Three Crossings. The fate of the garrison at Rock Ridge is unknown, but the worst is feared. It numbered four men, all of the Eleventh Ohio cavalry. Monday afternoon about forty Indians effected a stampede of the herd of mules and horses belonging to the Sweetwater garrison, and succeeded in getting away with four horses and six mules. One Indian was killed. Yesterday I sent Lieutenant Bretney, with eight men of his company, to Sweetwater, then to proceed to Rock Ridge if deemed safe. He will be at the latter place tomorrow, I also sent Captain Green, with sixty men of the Eleventh Kansas, provided with twenty days' rations to go up the road as far as Rock Ridge, with instructions to repair the telegraph line and take the necessary measures for the immediate rebuilding of the station at Rock Ridge, I also turned over to Captain Lybe five of the government teams that came up with my regimental train, and ordered him to proceed at once to his station at Three Crossings and distribute his company according to orders from you, and also to submit to the order and direction of Captain Green in reference to repairing the telegraph, and re-erection of station at Rock Ridge."

Lieutenant Bretney proceeded up the road as ordered and investigated the condition of the various stations, and his report shows that on May 26 three Indians made an attempt to take the herd at Sweetwater station, but were repulsed by the garrison, who killed one hostile and wounded another. Fortunately none of the small force was injured. Two days later the Indians returned in force and

succeeded in stampeding four horses and two mules. The little garrison fired at the hostiles and wounded one of them. On June 1 the Indians again returned and made a desperate attempt to run off the balance of the horses, but the soldiers, being on the watch, opened a vigorous fire and drove them off. This party cut the telegraph wire and carried off 100 yards of it; Lieutenant Bretney also reported that on the 27th of May, about 150 savages made a furious attack on Saint Mary's station and in a short time succeeded in setting fire to the buildings. The garrison, consisting of five men, retreated to an old well outside of quarters, where they escaped to South Pass. The operator, Private Chavil St. Clair, took precaution enough to secure a relay, sounder and a coil of fine wire, and was thus enabled to communicate with Fort Bridger. The garrison lost everything but the fire arms and the clothes on their back. Their horse equipments were burned. There were but two horses kept at the station; one of these the Indians captured and the other was shot to prevent its falling into their hands. They cut about 400 yards of telegraph wire and burned the poles. When the Indians left they moved to the south, passing up the valley of Sage creek. The garrison did as well as could be expected under the circumstances. When the Indians came within proper distance they fired upon them briskly. Several were known to have been wounded. None of the garrison was injured.

The Indians were active along the telegraph line at this time. A little affair occurred at Platte Bridge on the morning of June 3 which made something of a stir but did not result very seriously. Six Indians appeared on the river bank, opposite the post, and it was thought their object was to draw the men across the river and lead them into an ambush they had prepared. As soon as the alarm was given, First Sergeant Samuel B. White, Eleventh Ohio cavalry who was in charge, dispatched a messenger to Colonel Plumb of the Eleventh Kansas cavalry, who was at Camp Dodge, informing him of the appearance of the hostiles. As soon as this messenger had gone, Sergeant White ordered a twelve-pound howitzer trained on the Indians and the first fire resulted in crippling two of their ponies, but inflicted no injury on the savages, who quickly took refuge behind the rocks. The sergeant then mounted ten men and sent them to the bluffs on the North Platte to watch the movements of the enemy and followed these by ten soldiers on foot in the rear to prevent the mounted men being cut off by a superior force. One Indian was seen going toward the telegraph line with the evident intention of cutting it. He was pursued and fired upon, but only the horse was hit. As soon as Colonel Plumb received the message from Platte Bridge, he mounted ten men of Company B, Eleventh Kansas cavalry,

and hastened with all possible speed to the scene of hostilities. Arriving at Platte Bridge, he took ten men of Company G, Eleventh Ohio cavalry, all mounted, and proceeded in pursuit of the Indians. On leaving Camp Dodge, he had ordered twenty more men of his own regiment to mount as soon as possible and follow him. The pursuit of the Indians led Colonel Plumb and his command across to the north side of the Platte and then over some rough country directly north of the post. A hard chase of five miles brought them within shooting distance of the hostiles and a running fight ensued which resulted in one Indian pony being killed and two Indians wounded. One-half of Colonel Plumb's force had fallen behind on account of their horses being unable to keep up. The Indians, aware of the situation, now turned and made a vigorous charge on their assailants, but Colonel Plumb and his ten troopers received them by showing a compact front and delivering a galling fire. The Indians now turned and fled. Shortly after, about sixty Indians charged down the bottom of Dry creek, a half mile to the left of the command, with the evident purpose of cutting them off from Platte Bridge. The little party now realized that they were in a dangerous position, but fortunately the twenty men who had been ordered to follow from Camp Dodge appeared in sight and the Indians turned and fled. Six or seven of the soldiers started in pursuit of some hostiles who had turned to the right. The soldiers pressed them closely and were led into ambush by about thirty Indians in front and rear. At the time of this attack the soldiers found themselves with empty revolvers and were unable to hold their ground until assistance could arrive. In this affair Private W. T. Bonwell, Company F, Eleventh Kansas, and Private Sahlnecker, Company G, were killed. Night coming on, the troops returned to Platte Bridge station.

The remains of Private Bonwell were buried where he fell and a sandstone monument was erected over his grave which was alongside of the road leading to Garden Creek falls. This monument was removed and the bones of the soldier were disinterred in the fall of 1899 and shipped to Fort Russell where they were interred in the soldiers' cemetery.

#### ROBERT STUART BUILT THE FIRST CABIN IN WYOMING

One of the first chapters of Wyoming's history was enacted by a courageous little party of fur traders on their way from Astoria to Saint Louis. When they arrived at Saint Louis they had shortened the route of Lewis and Clark, had discovered the Sweetwater and North Platte rivers and had discovered that most important gateway through the Rockies, South Pass.



They built the first cabin in what is now the state of Wyoming in November, 1812, at a point along the river near Bessemer Bend, and for five weeks rested and recuperated from the exertion and hunger of the months preceding and prepared for the dark days to come before they should arrive at Saint Louis.

There were seven of them in the party that left Astoria on June 29, 1812, Robert Stuart, Ben Jones, Robert McClellan, John Day, Ramsey Crooks, Andri Vallar, and Francis Le Clerc. They started up the Columbia river in canoes. Before they were out many days, one of the party, John Day, became demented and was sent back to Astoria in the care of some friendly Indians. In a few days, they came across some men who had been separated from another party and gave them provisions and one of them, a man named Miller, joined Stuart in Day's place.

They rode toward the south and east looking for a river that would take them to the Missouri. They killed what game they could, feasting when their luck was good and going without food when there was nothing to kill. In August, they encountered some thieving Indians, the Crows. These Indians tried to rob the white men and followed them for 150 miles. Finally, one night in September, as they were camped on the Snake (Green) river, all their horses were stolen. Then they took up the journey on foot and after much suffering and many hardships they reached the Grand Tetons about October 1. There was a great deal of snow on the ground and they were forced to ford many streams. They were without food. McClellan, for some personal reason, decided to try traveling alone and he left the party. Traveling became harder and the game was not only scarce, but they were so nearly exhausted that their shots went wild and they were unable to kill what little game they found. At one time, they were without food for three days. They kept pushing on, always being cheered and urged by their leader, Stuart. McClellan was found and restored to the party although he begged to be allowed to die. He was so emaciated that he was almost a skeleton. His comrades divided his load among them and supported him as well as they could in their weakened condition. On the fourth day of their enforced fast, they came upon a run-down buffalo bull. They dared not let it get away and they surrounded the beast and took great care in aiming at it. They were successful in killing it. Their hunger was so great that they did not want to wait to cook the meat, but tried to eat it raw. Stuart, who always managed to keep a cool head, made some broth and forced the men to drink it. Otherwise, they would have died by gorging themselves.

Since losing their horses, they had been carrying all their provisions and equipment on their backs. On October 18, they met a large band of Snake Indians. These Indians were friendly and gave them food and shelter. They were induced to part with an ancient horse in exchange for a pistol, an axe, a knife, and a few other trifles. They loaded the animal with as much of their burden as it could carry and leading it, they journeyed on, still keeping to the south and east and still searching for the river that would float them to the Missouri. They trailed slowly over the continental divide and reached the Sweetwater, although they did not know it, for it had not yet been named or charted. After camping a few days on the banks of the Sweetwater, they proceeded in an easterly direction, and in a short time found themselves on the banks of the North Platte and then continued on their journey for several more days, until they concluded to camp until warm weather.

Stuart kept a diary on this trip which was afterwards edited by Washington Irving. In describing this part of the journey, he said: "Late in the afternoon of the 30th (October) they came to where the stream, now to a considerable size, poured along in a ravine between precipices of red stone two hundred feet in height. For a distance it dashed along, over huge masses of rock, with foaming violence, as if exasperated by being compressed in so narrow a channel, and at length leaped down a chasm that looked dark and frightful in the gathering twilight.<sup>1</sup>

"For a part of the next day, the wild river in its capricious wanderings, led them through a variety of striking scenes. At one time they were upon high plains, like platforms among the mountains, with herds of buffaloes roaming about them; at another, among rude, rocky defiles, broken into cliffs and precipices, where the black-tailed deer bounded off among the crags, and the big-horn basked on the sunny brow of the precipice.

"In the after part of the day they came to another scene, surpassing in savage grandeur those already described. They had been traveling for some distance through a pass of the mountains, keeping parallel with the river as it roared along, out of sight, through a deep ravine. Sometimes their devious path approached the margin of cliffs below which the river foamed and boiled and whirled among the masses of rock that had fallen into its channel. As they crept cautiously on, leading their solitary pack-horse along these giddy heights, they all at once came to where the river thundered down a succession of precipices, throwing up clouds of spray, and making a prodigious din and uproar. The travelers remained for a time, gazing

<sup>1</sup> This is the Grand Canyon of the Platte, at the head of which the Pathfinder dam has been built.

with mingled awe and delight at this furious cataract, to which Mr. Stuart gave, from the color of the impending rocks, the name of The Fiery Narrows."

Stuart's party surely possessed the true spirit of adventure. Footsore, hungry, and utterly weary, yet they could take the time to remain "for a time, gazing with mingled awe and delight" at the Grand canyon.

After following the river two more days, they decided that they must find a place to stop and recuperate. Stuart showed excellent judgment in this, for to go on in the face of the winter's snows and cold would have meant disaster to the little party. They found a low point of land on a bend in the river. There were cottonwoods and willows there for building materials and firewood. There were mountains to the south and west, which furnished retreats for big-horn and bears and black-tailed deer. The lower ground was the haunt of herds of buffalo. This bend is recognized as the Bessemer Bend and the mountains described are Casper and Muddy mountains. The meat that they killed in large quantities was stored along the banks of a little stream. This is the Lower Poison Spider creek.

Stuart's diary describes their camp as follows: "As the slaughter of so many buffaloes had provided the party with beef for the winter, in case they met with no further supply, they now set to work, heart and hand, to build a comfortable wigwam. In a little while, the woody promontory rang with the unwonted sound of the axe. Some of its lofty trees were laid low, and by the second evening the cabin was complete. It was eight feet wide and eighteen feet long. The walls were six feet high and the whole was covered with buffalo skins. The fire-place was in the center and the smoke found its way out through a hole in the roof." This sturdy little cabin was Wyoming's first house.

A small band of Arapahoe Indians, whom they did not trust, visited them for a few days after they had been in their camp for only five weeks. The Arapahoes left without harming them, but fearing their return in another mood, Stuart packed up his men and some provisions and moved on toward the east. Again they endured hardships. The crust on the snow cut their feet and the cold caused them acute suffering. The poor old horse carried enough meat for them, but they had little to feed it in return except willow twigs and cottonwood bark.

After going as far east as the western border of Nebraska, they built a new winter camp, said by some to have been at the present site of Gering. When spring came on, they tried to go down the river in a canoe, but the sand-bars and snags made this sort of travel-

ing slow and tedious and again they traveled on foot. At Grand Island they met some fur traders just out from Saint Louis. These men gave them a boat made of deer skins stretched over poles and it was not long before they were in Saint Louis.

Their journey is said to be the most venturesome and the most productive of results of any ever undertaken across this country. Their path was the Overland Trail followed by thousands a few years later.

#### "ABSAROKA," THE LAND OF THE CROWS

"Absaroka," in the Crow language, means "The Crows." Natrona county comprises a portion of the land controlled by the Crow Indians when the white men first commenced to make their expeditions into the Rocky Mountain regions in the early part of 1800.

Arapooish was chief of the Crow tribe in 1830, and that he recognized the wonderful advantages of this locality fully as much as his white brethren do these days, is evidenced from his address as recorded by Washington Irving in his "Adventures of Captain Bonneville": "Before we accompany Captain Bonneville into the Crow country, we will impart a few facts about this wild region, and the wild people who inhabit it. We are not aware of the precise boundaries, if there are any, of the country claimed by the Crows; it appears to extend from the Black Hills to the Rocky mountains, including a part of their lofty ranges, and embracing many of the plains and valleys watered by the Wind river, the Yellowstone, the Powder river, the Little Missouri, and the Nebraska (now the Platte). The country varies in soil and climate; there are vast plains of sand and clay, studded with large red sandhills; other parts are mountainous and picturesque; it possesses warm springs, and coal mines, and abounds of game.

"But let us give the account of the country as rendered by Arapooish, a Crow chief, to Mr. Robert Campbell, of the Rocky Mountain Fur company.

"This is the eulogium of his country by Arapooish:

"'The Crow country,' said he, 'is a good country. The Great Spirit has put it exactly in the right place; while you are in it you fare well; whenever you go out of it, whichever way you travel, you fare worse.

"'If you go to the south, you have to wander over great barren plains; the water is warm and bad, and you meet the fever and ague.

"'To the north it is cold; the winters are long and bitter, with no grass. You cannot keep horses there, but must travel with dogs. What is a country without horses?

“On the Columbia they are poor and dirty, paddle about in canoes, and eat fish. Their teeth are worn out; they are always taking fish-bones out of their mouths. Fish is poor food.

“To the east, they dwell in villages; they live well; but they drink the muddy water of the Missouri—that is bad. A Crow’s dog would not drink such water.

“About the forks of the Missouri is a fine country; good water; good grass; plenty of buffalo. In summer, it is almost as good as the Crow country; but in winter it is cold; the grass is gone; and there is no salt weed for the horses.

“The Crow country is exactly in the right place. It has snowy mountains and sunny plains; all kinds of climates and good things for every season. When the summer heats scorch the prairies, you can draw up under the mountains, where the air is sweet and cool, the grass fresh and the bright streams come tumbling out of the snow-banks. There you can hunt the elk, the deer, and the antelope, when their skins are fit for dressing; there you will find plenty of white bears and mountain sheep.

“In the autumn, when your horses are fat and strong from the mountain pastures, you can go down into the plains and hunt the buffalo, or trap beaver on the streams. And when winter comes on, you can take shelter in the woody bottoms along the rivers; there you will find buffalo meat for yourselves, and cottonwood bark for your horses; or you may winter in the Wind River valley, where there is salt weed in abundance.

“The Crow country is exactly in the right place. Everything good is to be found there. There is no country like the Crow country.”

It has been nearly one hundred years since Arapooish delivered this encomium regarding the Crow country, but every word of it is as true today as it was in the days of Arapooish. The Great Spirit surely put it in the right place for the red man as well as the pale face who has taken his place. Where stood the tepee now stands the mansion, the business blocks and factories; where roamed the buffalo, now pasture the sheep and the cattle; where the Indian spent his time in the chase to gather his winter’s provisions, the white man now harvests bountiful crops of grain and drills deep into the ground for oil which has provided employment for thousands of men and has caused Casper to grow from a frontier village to one of the leading cities of the Middle West.

Arapooish was right. “The Crow country is in the right place. Everything good is to be found here. There is no country like the Crow country.”



"Absaroka" would have been a more appropriate name for the county than "Natrona," but after all, the name does not change the conditions, and while you are in the county "you fare well; whenever you go out of it, whichever way you travel, you fare worse."

Volumes have been written about the wonderful resources of Central Wyoming, but all that has been said and all that has been written could be boiled down into the few words of praise of Chief Arapooish nearly a hundred years ago.

In many respects the Crows were vastly different from other tribes of Indians, but in these days of civilization the white man is want to class all the Indian tribes alike, but they were as different as are the sets and castes of the white man. The highbred and the lowbred among the Indians were very pronounced, and woe unto the white man who let it be known that he mistook a Crow for a Sioux or a Sioux for a Shoshone or in any way belittled a member of one tribe by mistaking him for a member of another. The Crows considered themselves, and no doubt were, of the highest caste among the Indians in this part of the country. They were of the Hidat-sa sub-stock of the Siouan family. Their native name is Absaroka, which is said to signify a species of hawk. The French called them *les Corbeaux*, the English translation of which this tribe has been known by since the white man found them. The tribe numbered about 10,000 in their best days.<sup>1</sup> The Crow country, or home of the Crows, or the Absaroka, was the valley and watershed of the Big Horn river. It extended far to the eastward, including the valleys of the Rosebud, Tongue, and Powder rivers. The Crows were considered to be the best formed physically of any of the western Indians. Tall, graceful, pleasing in physiognomy, they were exceptionally fine looking. In dress and ornamentation likewise they excelled most other tribes. They made a particular point of developing long hair, which they regarded as a great ornament. But however much they might excel other tribes in physical development, they were in no degree behind them in the vices and defects of Indian character. They were the most expert of horse stealers and the most skillful robbers among the Missouri tribes. They always professed friendship among the whites and usually were peaceably disposed toward them. There is in fact almost no record of their having killed white men or having made war against them; but very many instances of their having committed robberies upon them. They fought against other tribes of Indians for many years to hold the country which they claimed as theirs and they held a great deal of it until the white man came, and then they combined with the other tribes of Indians and fought against civilization and against being dispossessed of their rich hunting grounds.

<sup>1</sup> Chittenden's History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West, vol. 2, p. 855.



## A WHITE INDIAN WOMAN

During the years from 1889 to 1906, or until the Northwestern railroad was extended from Casper to Lander, the Arapahoe and Shoshone Indians from the Wind River reservation and the Arapahoe sub-agency hauled the freight and supplies from the railroad station at Casper to the reservation, the distance being about one hundred and twenty-five miles. On these trips there were usually from twenty to forty buck Indians and generally about half that number of squaws.

During the month of August, in 1900, there came to Casper with one of these bands of Indians a white woman, who wore the usual Indian garb, painted her face as the Indians do and spoke the Indian language, but she could not speak the English language. The woman attracted the attention of some of Casper's citizens, and it was learned from the white man in charge of the visiting Indians that the woman had been captured by the Cheyennes when she was a child about two years old, and had been raised with and married to an Arapahoe Indian named John Brokenhorn. The story was published in the *Natrona County Tribune*, and was copied in a number of western newspapers. The newspaper article attracted the attention of Mrs. A. M. Cook of Davenport, Iowa, who wrote a letter to the publisher of the *Tribune*, making further inquiry as to the identity of the woman. Mrs. Cook said she was very much interested in the news, for she was captured thirty-five years before at Rock Creek, Wyoming, and her baby sister, Lizzie, was captured at the same time, but she had not seen her since the night of the capture. Mrs. Cook said that her father was Jasper Fletcher, who came to the United States from England in 1861. They started for California in 1865, there being the father and mother, three sons and two daughters. They left Quincy, Illinois, in May and on the plains the Fletchers united with a train of seventy-five wagons and continued their journey until they reached Rock Creek station in Wyoming territory, thirty-one miles east of Fort Halleck. Just as they had camped for dinner at noon and when the entire Fletcher family was near a stream a little distance from the train, a war party of three hundred Cheyenne Indians sprang up all around them. Mr. Fletcher and his three sons escaped to the wagons. Mrs. Fletcher and her two daughters, the younger, Lizzie, being but two years old, were seized by the Indians. The mother was thrust through the body with a spear, and instantly killed. One of the Indians seized Lizzie, raised her to his saddle and rode off. Her sister saw her once again that day, but never afterwards. Mary Fletcher, the older girl, who was thirteen years of age, was struck with arrows in several places and pulled them out with her own hands. Menimick

was chief of this band and Black Kettle was chief of the tribe. Menimick took charge. One of the leading braves took charge of Mary, and she remained his slave during the whole term of her captivity. Immediately after the capture, the band fled rapidly to the mountains, where the squaws belonging to the band were concealed. There was a white boy with the squaws, who had been captured by the band of Indians in New Mexico. The boy pointed to the valley and cried: "Look! That is the way they serve them all." The train of wagons was burning and white people were being murdered. In one of the wagons was a ten gallon cask of brandy, and the Indians had drank this and were indulging in a scalp dance, all the Indians being wildly drunk. The scalp dance is one of the most horrible sights that can be looked upon by a white person, and the oldest Fletcher girl, who was being guarded by her captors, was compelled to witness the whole affair.

The next morning the Indians tied the girl to a saddle and traveled in an easterly direction. Two days after the capture the band came upon a family named Cackle, who were on their way to Colorado. The Indians took a small child from Mrs. Cackle's arms and seizing it by the feet, dashed its brains out against the wagon hub. Mr. Cackle, two children and the mother of Mrs. Cackle were killed on the spot, but Mrs. Cackle was carried away. Three nights after the capture, however, the woman was placed against a tree in a sitting position and she was made a target of, her body being pierced by more than a dozen poison-pointed arrows<sup>1</sup> before her prayers were answered for the ending of her terrible existence. That same week this band of Indians and the soldiers of Fort Laramie engaged in a fight, and during the combat a buck Indian stood over the Fletcher girl ready to kill her, should the soldiers get in a position to recapture her.

Darkness came on, fighting ceased, and the Indians made their escape. The next morning the white girl's face was painted red and striped green and black and her hair was colored with soot water, and her eye lashes and eye brows were burned with hot ashes. The girl was compelled to care for fourteen ponies during the day while they were traveling, packing them in the morning and unpacking them at night, and her other duty was to gather wood for the fire that was built every night. The Indian braves rode the ponies during the day and the squaws were compelled to walk, and the girl and the white boy

<sup>1</sup> To procure the poison for their arrow heads the Indians would take a fresh deer liver and fasten it to a pole, then go to a den of rattlesnakes and poke the liver toward the snakes. The snakes would strike the liver until it was saturated with poison. The liver was then put away until it became thoroughly dry, after which it was pounded to a fine powder and then placed in a buckskin bag, to be used as they needed it. The powder would stick like glue to any moistened surface. The Indians used these poisoned arrow heads in their battles, and it was their delight to imbed one of these poisoned points into the flesh of a white man, which meant slow but sure death.

tramped on foot with the squaws. After about six weeks' traveling the band reached the main village of the tribe, among the mountains in eastern Colorado. When all the bands were assembled there were about four thousand Indians in the village. Here they indulged in war dances, and these dances are described as the wildest orgies in savagery that possibly could be imagined.

The bands started out on another expedition after four days of feasting and dancing, and on this journey the squaws would beat and abuse the white girl to appease their anger. During the remainder of the summer and fall and winter and spring that followed the band was continually on the move; they waded and swam the creeks and rivers, struggled through deep snows and endured the severe cold and all kinds of hardships. One day in the early spring while crossing a river the ice broke loose and started rapidly down the stream. The girl was on the floating ice and was unable to escape. She was carried rapidly with the current, and the squaws laughed and danced with glee to see her moving rapidly to her destruction. She finally leaped from the ice into the stream and swam ashore, where she was welcomed by the braves as a heroine, but the squaws were jealous of her and treated her with all kinds of indignities.

In the spring of 1866, the band came to a white man's trading camp. A man named Hanger was in charge of the trading camp, and the Fletcher girl walked into his tent, dressed and painted like an Indian girl, and in English asked Hanger if he had any soap. The girl had been ordered to keep out of sight of the white men, but if anything did happen that she should come in contact with them to act as though she was an Indian girl and not to speak a word of English. One of her captors was in the trader's tent when she came in, and when she asked for the soap, the Indian struck her in the face and knocked her down. She was carried out of the tent and given in charge of the squaws. The squaws were jealous of the white girl and wanted to get rid of her, because she was becoming a favorite among the braves, but they did not dare to kill her. The squaws arranged to take her to the white man's tent, unbeknown to the bucks. Hanger told the girl that he would buy her from the captors, and in due time he paid the Indians sixteen hundred dollars in cash, one good horse and a gun for her release. The white man then placed the girl in charge of an Indian agent who took her to Fort Laramie, and from there she was taken to Fort Jura, and from there the Forty-eighth Wisconsin infantry took her to Fort Leavenworth, and from there she was sent back to Illinois among friends, arriving in Illinois in December, 1866. A year afterward she was married in Davenport, Iowa, to William E. Cook.

After her marriage she and her husband went to Salt Lake, where the girl met her father, who informed his daughter that he lay in a ditch two days after the Indians attacked him, and he was badly wounded. Her three brothers all made their escape and two of them went to Colorado and one to California, but until the article was published in the newspaper she had never heard anything concerning her baby sister.

In due time Mrs. Cook came to Casper, and from here she went by stage to the Arapahoe sub-agency, where she found the woman and positively identified her as her sister, who was then thirty-nine years of age, having lived with the Indians for thirty-seven years. She was married to John Brokenhorn, an Arapahoe, and a number of children had been born to them. She could not speak English and she dressed and lived like the other squaws. Through an interpreter Mrs. Cook told her sister how she had been captured, how their mother had been killed and how their father and brothers made their escape, and how she herself had been compelled to live with the Indians for sixteen months, and how she made her escape. She wanted her to go back to Davenport with her where she would be cared for, and where she could dress and act like the white woman that she was, but Mrs. Brokenhorn would not go; she declared that she was an Indian, that she was satisfied to live as she had always lived; to call a tepee her home, to wear a blanket, to do the drudgery as all the squaws were doing, and to claim a full-blooded Indian as her husband, and that she could not remember anything about being captured, as her white sister had explained to her.

Mrs. Cook returned to Casper alone, and went back to her home with a broken heart. She said that although she had had many bitter experiences, when her sister refused to give up her wild life and live like a woman civilized, it was the hardest blow she had endured since she saw her mother killed by being thrust through the body with a spear by a blood-thirsty Indian.

The absolute proof that she was actually a white woman had its effect on Mrs. Brokenhorn, and although she continued to live on the reservation with her husband, she made it plain to the squaws of the tribe that she felt she was of superior birth and was of considerable more importance than the common Indians. That he had a white woman for a wife also elevated Brokenhorn, in his own estimation at least, to a higher plane than his fellow men, and while he, like most of the Indians, seldom made much of an outward display of his emotions, nevertheless he was actually raised to a higher degree than he was before the fact became established that his wife's parents were of the white race. In fact Brokenhorn felt that he was so great that

when the allotment of land was made by the government he refused to accept the portion that was set aside for him. He felt that the United States government had no right to portion out to the Indians land which had been their own, and thus check the nomadic career of the red man, and he then and there set himself up as an Indian doctor, a horse trader and manufacturer of Indian curios, and by this means succeeded in realizing a modest income which was sufficient to support himself and family. He never overlooked an opportunity to condemn the United States government and belittle the motives of the white people in general. Unlike nearly all the other Indians, however, Brokenhorn would not beg, neither was he addicted to drinking whiskey and gambling, but with the small returns he received as an Indian doctor, the profit he made in swapping horses, and the small amount of money he got from the sale of the Indian curios, together with the help that his wife gave him in acting as midwife among the Indians, as well as doing some bead work and raising a few chickens, they lived very comfortably in a small cabin about half a mile from Saint Stephen's Mission. This cabin, although small, was always kept neat and clean, which was also different from the manner in which the homes of most of the Indians are kept. Brokenhorn now (1923) is seventy-three years of age, and his wife is sixty-two, and it will not be long until they are both called to the land of their fathers, and thus will end the sad, sad story of the white Indian woman, which reads more like fiction than a reality.

### CHIEF RED CLOUD IN OUR COUNTY JAIL

In the early '90's the Indians in this part of the country had not fully gotten over the idea that they could not violate the laws of the land and the customs of the country with impunity, and large bands of the red men traveled from the agencies in Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and other states to the Wind River agency in Wyoming to visit with the Arapahoes and the Shoshones. While on their way to and from the agency they would slaughter all the deer, elk, antelope and other game they could find. They generally traveled in bands of from 100 to 200, and in the game country they would spread out and cover a distance at least fifty miles wide, and after they had passed there was but little game left.

On account of the large number of Indians in these bands, the authorities were reluctant to arrest them, for it was feared they would go on the warpath, and instead of killing the deer and the antelope they would turn their guns on the white people. The Indians, of course, were aware of the fact that the authorities did not interfere



with them because of their numbers and on account of the fear that they would start a fight, and their actions, while traveling through the country, were of such nature that they did not allay the feeling of fear among the whites. Every year these large bands would invade this part of the state and their wanton slaughter had driven nearly all the wild game out of the country. It was claimed that these bands not only killed the wild game, but they gathered up some of the horses and cattle that happened to be in their path.

In 1894, the people and authorities of Casper and Natrona county decided that the Indian should have no more privileges than the white man and that the wholesale slaughter of game must be stopped. Early in June of that year old Chief Red Cloud and a band of about 300 other Sioux from the Pine Ridge agency passed through the town headed for the Wind River. They camped at the Pine mountains, about thirty miles west from town and were slaughtering and feasting on antelope. A complaint was sworn out by W. J. Burton for the arrest of Chief Red Cloud, Jack Red Cloud, his son, and Dreaming Bear, charging them with being non-residents of the state and with wantonly killing game out of season, and on Sunday, June 10, 1894, Deputy Sheriff Oscar Hiestand and Town Marshal Frank Berg made the trip to Pine mountain and served the warrants on the three Indians. When the authorities came upon them, the Indians had broken camp and all of them except the big chief and his son were traveling in a westerly direction. There was an abundance of antelope meat and pelts in the chief's wagon. After the warrants had been read, the officers told the Indians that they would have to go back to Casper and stand trial. Jack Red Cloud, by many signs and a few words spoken in the Indian language, informed his father of their predicament.

The old chief at once raised his right hand high above his head, and an Indian sentinel, who was stationed on a little knoll several hundred yards distant, returned the signal to the chief and then turning his face to the west gave a few zig-zag movements with his right hand and the whole cavalcade halted. The chief then gave another signal and the sentinel signalled to the main band with his left hand and the band returned. They circled around Red Cloud and his son and the two officers. A pow-wow ensued for about fifteen minutes, during which time the officers did not know whether the Indians were discussing the advisability of scalping them or resisting arrest. After the suspense of a quarter of an hour the old chief spoke to his son and then John told the officers that they would return to Casper, provided they were allowed to bring their guns with them. The officers told them to load their firearms in their wagons and hit the



trail for Casper without delay. The officers and the three Indians started for town at once, and they were followed by about fifty other Indians. The party arrived in town at about dusk, and Chief Red Cloud, Jack Red Cloud, and Dreaming Bear were placed in the county jail where they remained until Monday morning. Chief Red Cloud's wife sat on the sidewalk in front of the jail yard until after midnight wailing, moaning, and crying in an attempt to excite the other Indians so they would go on the warpath and release her husband and there were quite a number of citizens who, fearing the Indians would declare war, implored the officers to turn the Indians loose. The officers were firm, however, and if the Indians had commenced hostilities they would have found the people ready, for there were fifty men armed and ready for battle any time, either day or night, that the word might be given. The Indians went about with scowling faces, but nothing more occurred to indicate their revengeful feelings.

Monday morning the three Indians were brought from the jail and placed on trial before J. K. Calkins, justice of the peace. George B. McCalmont was prosecuting attorney for the county and he fearlessly urged the conviction of the Indians and the imposing of a heavy fine. The Indians pleaded that they were without rations; that they were hungry, and that they did not know it was against the law to kill the game. Justice Calkins fined the three red men twenty dollars each, but in consideration of the promise of Chief Red Cloud that he would see to it that no more game was killed, the fine was remitted, the prisoners discharged and told to go their way. They went to the Wind river, concluded their visit, and on their return trip again began killing antelope at a destructive rate. When they reached the Casper stock yards east from town on their return trip, they were again arrested and taken before Justice Calkins for trial. They were found guilty, and the original fine of twenty dollars each was imposed upon the three of them.

They refused to pay the fine and many of them made dire threats against the people of the town and declared they would release their chief from jail by force. The armed men selected to uphold the law were hoping they would start hostilities, but the Indians soon learned that they could not bluff the officers and they were smart enough to know that the whites were ready for a fight. They finally agreed that if Sheriff O. M. Rice would allow them \$85 for Red Cloud's team, wagon, and harness, which was the amount necessary to pay the fines and court costs, they would give that officer a bill of sale and leave the country. The deal was made and the whole band of Indians left for the Pine Ridge agency without delay. If the people had not shown that they were ready for a fight, the Indians would undoubt-

edly have attempted to release their chief by force. Since then the Indians have gone around Natrona county while on their way to visit the Wind River agency, but the Fremont county authorities followed the example of Natrona county and several hundred of the Indians' ponies had to be sacrificed to their mania for killing game and stealing range stock.

At the time Chief Red Cloud was arrested, he was broken in health and nearly blind, but he had not lost any of his contempt for the white people and disregarded our laws and our rights as much as he dared. His son John, who could speak the English language and was well acquainted with our laws and customs, entertained the same feeling toward the white race as his father. Dreaming Bear, who was Red Cloud's chief counsellor, was an intelligent Sioux Indian, and had received an education in Carlisle, but neither Dreaming Bear nor John Red Cloud would speak a word of English at the trial and B. E. Wheelock acted as interpreter.

How Red Cloud was given his name, and a short sketch of his life might be of interest. It is said that a young Ogallallah chief of the Sioux nation was dashing across the prairie of Dakota on his horse, followed by a band of young men of the same tribe who had chosen him as their leader. From the chief's shoulders waved a scarlet blanket, and an onlooker remarked: "He looks like a flying red cloud." This name pleased the young buck, and from that time he was known as Makh-pi-ya-luta, in the Sioux Indian tongue meaning Red Cloud. Some authorities say he was born in 1818, others claim 1821, but on his monument at the Pine Ridge reservation the date of his birth is recorded as 1824. When but a young man, by his successful leadership, he soon made himself a sub-chief. His early wars were waged against the Crows, Pawnees and other tribes, and he was always successful in his thieving and bloody campaigns. In 1848 he was a noted warrior, and began a conflict with the white men that continued for twenty years, during which time he was practically the war lord of Nebraska, Dakota, Kansas, and large parts of Iowa, Wyoming, Montana and Minnesota. Red Cloud regarded the white man as a foe and treated him as such. He never lost an opportunity to rob and kill the white men, women and children who invaded the land that he claimed belonged to the Indians. On December 21, 1866, Red Cloud, with a band of about 3,000 Sioux, attacked a party of eighty-one soldiers and two civilians under command of Captain Fetterman, who had been sent out from Fort Phil Kearney by Colonel Henry B. Carrington to relieve a wood train, which the Indians were harassing. Fetterman and his men were surrounded by the Indians and not one escaped. The battlefield was a scene of

carnage indescribable. All the men, after being shot with rifles and arrows and hacked and hammered with knives and tomahawks, were, stripped naked and mutilated in a most horrible manner and then they were scalped. Again on August 2, 1867, Red Cloud and his band of not less than 3,000 warriors attacked a detachment of twenty-five soldiers, two officers and five civilians under command of Captain Powell at an improvised corral about six miles west from Fort Phil Kearney. This corral was formed by fourteen wagon boxes belonging to the contractors who were furnishing logs and wood for the fort. Using these wagon boxes as a fortification, and after fighting from about 7 o'clock in the morning until about 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon the troops defended themselves in such a manner that Red Cloud and his warriors failed to dislodge them. Again and again the Indians in great numbers rushed toward the temporary fort of the small band of soldiers, and every time the Indians came within range dozens and dozens of the redskins dropped to the ground with bullets through their bodies. It is variously estimated that from 300 to 1,000 Indians were killed in this engagement before Red Cloud gave up the fight. Four of the soldiers were killed in this engagement. This battle is now known as the "Wagon Box Fight," and undoubtedly was the greatest victory the white soldiers ever accomplished over the Indians. Thirty-two men repulsing three thousand Indians after fighting more than six hours and firing about three thousand shots from their breech-loading, single-shot Springfield rifles, and losing but four men is a record almost unbelievable. This fight, figuratively speaking, took the heart out of Chief Red Cloud. The greatest regret among the soldiers was that the term could not be applied literally.

When some of the older Indian chiefs wanted to sign a peace treaty and asked Red Cloud to join them, he replied, "No! No! I want war," and war he had for many years thereafter. Among some of the generals he fought against were Miles, Sheridan, Crook and Terry. In due time he was cooped up on a reservation, but he broke out whenever possible and committed fearful ravages upon the settlements. When old Sitting Bull led his warriors in the engagement which cost General Custer and all his men their lives Red Cloud had prepared to join his brother "Medicine Man," but General Crook swooped down upon him and his band just as they were ready to start, taking away all their ponies and arms, and made Red Cloud a prisoner. In November, 1868, after his long years of warfare which resulted in greatly diminishing his band and the loss of thousands of miles of territory, he at last realized the hopelessness of continuing the fight and consented to sign what he termed a "peace paper."

The old warrior had been in more than 200 pitched battles since he adopted the name of Red Cloud. He was now penniless and helpless, but in more than one subsequent Indian outbreak he was suspected of having stirred up the Indians to revolt, but nothing could ever be proven against him. He was given a two-story frame house on the Pine Ridge Agency and lived at the government's expense, but respected the laws only when he was compelled to do so. He retained his leadership among a small band of Indians that had a hatred toward the government, for many years. He died at the Pine Ridge, South Dakota, reservation on December 10, 1909. At the time of his death he was blind, deaf and childish, and if the souls of Indians are cast into the lower regions where those of white men who commit black crimes are supposed to dwell, old Red Cloud had a most terrible accounting to make even to Satan before he entered the gates of Hades.

#### LOU POLK'S WILD RIDE

Dogae Lee was the name by which a slender man, about five feet, four inches in height, with small bead-like eyes, drooping moustache, and a general careless air, was known by in Casper in 1890.<sup>1</sup> He had been engaged in the business of conducting a dance hall in Casper until, becoming involved in debt and at the same time jealous of his "best girl," he gave it out to a few of his confidential friends that he intended to take her out of town and give her some severe punishment, intimating that his rival would be welcome to her when he had completed his work. Accordingly, one rainy afternoon the latter part of April, Dogae procured a couple of saddle horses and, accompanied by his girl, known as Lou Polk, left the town. Parties who were in the secret expected a "rounding up" before they returned, and it soon became generally known that Dogae had taken the woman out of town to give her a whipping, but the first real news of anything serious was brought in by a sheep herder who was coming to town with a wagon. When within about two miles of town he was suddenly startled by a woman's scream and upon looking around beheld an equestrienne, hatless and with hair streaming, coming toward him with her horse on a run, and hotly pursued by a horseman who was loading his six-shooter as he came. Dashing up to the wagon she barely had time to ejaculate, "I'm Lou, and he's Dogae," when her pursuer came up, and with an oath ordered her to move on. Instead of obeying, she jumped from her horse. Dogae leveled his six-shooter at her and bade her mount or be killed on the spot. She remounted, but did not manage her horse to suit the fastidious taste of Dogae,

<sup>1</sup> *Wyoming Derrick*, May 21, 1890.

who took the reins from her hands, and with the remark, "Come on, we're going to the British Possessions," headed the horses into the hills. Lou managed, undetected by Lee, to drop her quirt into the wagon, probably as a mute appeal to her friends in town for help. But the herder, fearing he would become involved in trouble and incur the wrath of Lee, kept silent concerning his adventure and even told the livery man, who recognized the quirt as the woman's, that he had found it in the road. However, when night passed and they had not returned, the adventure was related to Sheriff Jaycox, who immediately started in pursuit, but they had such a start that it would have been a difficult task to overtake them, even had they left a plain trail. But heavy rains had fallen immediately after their flight, obliterating the trail to such extent that no one could follow it with any degree of certainty. However, the sheriff followed the trail for several days, tracing the fugitive and his companion to near Wendover, when he rapidly circled through the country, posting settlers, cow outfits and officers by telegraph and otherwise. He had the whereabouts of Lee and the woman figured down to a matter of only a few miles and had his instructions been followed, Lee would have been captured. Riding into a cow camp on Fish creek, the sheriff informed the boys that Dogae was in the immediate vicinity and liable to arrive in their camp at any moment, in the event of which occurrence they were to disarm and hold him as a prisoner until the officers could be communicated with. They agreed to do as the sheriff asked. But, although Dogae and the woman arrived at the camp within less than three hours after the sheriff's departure, the boys, for some reason, did not carry out his orders. Instead, J. C. Shaw and Tom King informed Dogae that the sheriff had been there; that he had them hemmed in and they had better give themselves up, as it was useless to attempt to get away. Dogae was cunning enough to pretend to acquiesce, and told them to take his horses and he and Lou would have the granger, who was in charge of the ranch, take them to the railroad. Lou was then unharmed, but the round-up boys had no sooner raised camp and got well under way than Dogae drove the granger off the ranch, threw the woman on the floor and with a pocket knife cut her nose off close to her face, and threw the dismembered organ across the room, after which he took the granger's best horse, saddle and a Winchester rifle, and leaving the miserable woman at the ranch, continued his desperate flight alone. The granger returned to the house as he witnessed Dogae's departure and found the woman in the condition stated above. Hastily harnessing a team he started with the unfortunate woman for Wendover, she having picked up the piece of nose, which she kept in her handkerchief wet with cold water. At Wendover



an attempt was made to secure the nose to its former place by means of court plaster, but the attempt was a failure. The mail carrier started with the woman for Douglas, and upon her arrival there Dr. Barber attempted to restore the inanimate flesh to its former place, but this could not be accomplished.

"We started out, as I supposed, on a visit and pleasure ride to Tom Hood's sheep camp," said Lou, "but from the time we saw the sheep herder, after we crossed the bridge at Casper, I was an unwilling prisoner. Dogae forced me to accompany him, by means of all kinds of horrible threats and a six-shooter. Sometimes he said he would kill me, and again that he was going to take me to Kansas. We rode without food for two days, when Dogae killed a rabbit and I ate part of it, in a cabin near Fetterman. Then we went without a morsel of food for four whole days, traveling nights and hiding in the bushes along the streams during the day. Finally, on the day he cut my nose off, we were hid in a gulch when I happened to raise my head and saw the sheriff passing a few hundred yards away. Dogae saw him at the same time, and pulling me to the ground placed his six-shooter to my ear and said if I moved he would blow my brains out. That same day we went to the cow camp. The boys told Dogae he had better turn back and give himself up. Dogae said he would, but as soon as the boys went away, he made the ranchman leave and told me he was going to cut my nose off and gouge one of my eyes out. He held me on the floor and cut my nose off as you can see, but did not touch my eyes. Then he got on the horse and rode away."

Dogae was never captured, but it is said he went to Kansas, and that is the last that was ever heard of him by anyone in this part of the country.

Lou Polk afterwards became the proprietor of the dance hall, located on the northwest corner of the alley, west across Wolcott street from where the postoffice is now located. Booze was sold by the woman without restraint, and gambling and dancing were the pastimes, and the cowboys and dancing girls often turned the night's entertainment from a fantastic revel into a furious mêlée.

Men who went to the place for a night's entertainment were often robbed and then laughed at and kicked out; they were jeered at if they did not spend money lavishly, and even murder was committed, until finally the decent people of the town threatened to burn the place down if the authorities could not or did not quell the nightly disturbances. The place was not burned, and it must be presumed that the strong hand of the law was put into effect, at least sufficiently to satisfy the fastidious objectors.



In the early '90's the buildings were torn down and a frame dwelling house was erected on the site by W. T. Evans in 1894. This frame building was afterwards veneered with brick and is still standing.

The dance hall business and the Polk woman's class at this time became unpopular in Casper and she moved farther west, and finally located in Fallon, Nevada, but the fast life undermined her health, and in 1907 she returned to Casper, a physical as well as a moral wreck, and on August 16, 1907, she died, and her remains are now resting in Highland cemetery. A stone is at the head of her grave, inscribed with her name and the dates 1867-1907. Her name when she died was not Polk, and only the pioneers of Casper recognize the grave when they pass by.

### DR. JOE BENSON CREMATED

About 4 o'clock Sunday morning, October 11, 1891, Casper's town jail, a one-story frame building located in the alley northwest from where the Townsend building now stands, was destroyed by fire and Dr. Joseph Benson (whose real name was Joseph P. Riley), who had been incarcerated the night before on a charge of drunkenness and fighting with Dr. Naulteus, was cremated. The doctor had been confined in this building many times before and every time he was placed in the jail he made the night hideous and kept the people in the neighborhood awake by yelling, "Fire!" "Murder!" "Help!" He hoped by this means to induce the officials to release him, and several times he succeeded, but in time it became an old story, and failed to have the desired effect. On this particular Saturday night the doctor's cries of murder, help, and fire were kept up from eight o'clock in the evening until long after midnight, and then for a time all was quiet and the people in the neighborhood who had been kept awake by his cries, were of the opinion that the doctor had fallen asleep. But during the quiet spell the doctor evidently was busy preparing the conflagration which cost him his life, the theory being that he undertook to burn a hole in the building large enough to crawl through, and thus make his escape. He had saturated the bed clothing with water, and with this no doubt intended to smother the flames after the hole had been burned large enough for him to crawl through.

Granville E. Butler was living close to the jail, and before the dawn of day his daughter Franc (now Mrs. Franc Sheffner) was awakened and discovered the fire. She aroused her father, and he immediately gave the alarm. The outside of the building at that time was not burned, but smoke was issuing from the roof. A number of men had responded to the alarm and an attempt was made to batter

the lock off the door with a sledge hammer, but without success. By this time a small hole had been burned through the south side of the building and several men with axes chopped the hole larger, hoping to thus gain an entrance and rescue the prisoner, but when the hole had been chopped large enough for a man's body to pass through, the doctor's body was seen lying on the floor with his arms and legs burned to a char. By this time the whole building was in flames and no one could enter, but a long-handled rake was secured and the armless and legless trunk of the unrecognizable man was drawn out and taken to the town hall. A coroner's jury returned a verdict that "the deceased came to his death while incarcerated in jail in the town of Casper, by fire, set inside the jail, by his own hand."

Dr. Joseph P. (Benson) Riley was about fifty-one years of age. He was in Casper about two years before he met his tragic death. It was said that he was a very capable physician when he was sober, but that was very seldom. In connection with his profession as a physician he owned an interest in a barbershop and did dentistry work on the side. The local newspaper in March, 1889, announced that "Dr. Benson is now provided with dentist tools, and can extract teeth without pain. Give him a call, at the barber shop." When he was under the influence of liquor he gave several reasons for changing his name, one of them being to the effect that he had killed a man, was tried, and sentenced to fifteen years in the penitentiary, but made his escape. Another story he sometimes told was that he was engaged to marry a young lady, but shortly before the time set for their marriage she was taken sick and died, and inasmuch as she could not take his name, he took hers. If this latter story was true, the young lady no doubt saved herself a great deal of grief by passing on before she became the wife of the doctor.

There were some superstitious people in Casper in those days and they imagined that they often saw the ghost of Dr. Benson stalking about at midnight on the spot where the doctor passed out of this life. Strange, sweet music was first heard, low and soft, like the murmur of a summer zephyr. It gradually increased in force, the sound becoming more melancholy until it resembled the eerie wail of a lost soul. Then a ghost-like figure, clad in a white robe, arose from the ashes where the building stood and a wild and fantastic dance ensued, and this was followed by a noise, the most diabolical that could be imagined, in the midst of which the spectral figure would arise and float away in a sheet of flame.

There were a number of people who claimed to have witnessed this scene, but they were probably in about the same condition that the doctor was when he set fire to the jail. There were plenty of

saloons in the town those days and there was no limit to the amount of whiskey a man could drink so long as he was able to stand before the bar and pay the price, and it may be said that there were quite a number of men here who partook of the corn juice quite freely.

Like most men who are continually under the influence of liquor, the doctor himself was not only in "hot water" most of the time, but he was the cause of considerable trouble for other people. About a week before his death, he had C. K. Bucknum arrested because Mr. Bucknum refused to allow him to take one of the latter's livery teams to be driven into the country. The trial was had before Justice Granville E. Butler. Major Palmer was attorney for Mr. Bucknum and the doctor was his own counsel. The doctor stated his case, and asked for ten thousand dollars damages, besides the costs of the trial. Major Palmer then arose and said, "Your honor, I move that the charge against my client be dismissed." John Shanley was among the large number of people present and no sooner were the words out of Major Palmer's mouth than Shanley shouted, "I second the motion." The judge declared the motion carried, the costs were assessed against the doctor, which he paid, and then imbibed so freely of strong drink that he became a nuisance and he was arrested upon a charge of being drunk and disorderly and taken to jail where he spent a sleepless night and those who lived nearby were also kept awake by his uproar.

The burning of the jail left the town and county without a building to confine the lawbreakers and for several years those who required confinement behind the barred windows and a padlock on the door were accommodated by being taken to Douglas and placed in the Converse county jail and the town of Casper and Natrona county paid one dollar per day for their keep.

### "CALAMITY JANE"

Much has been said and written concerning "Calamity Jane," a female character whose name in the early days of Wyoming was probably the most familiar of any woman in the Middle West, but the stories that have been told and written about her are as varied as was her very checkered career. When Miner's Delight, in Fremont county, was a prosperous but wild gold mining town in the '60's, Martha Jane Canary was a poor, neglected little girl, who did not know right from wrong, and whose associates were the rough men of that rough country. Among the residents of Miner's Delight at that time was a woman whose philanthropic promises induced the girl to accompany her back to New York state, where Jane was to be educated and civilized, but when the woman and girl arrived in the effete east, Jane

was rigged out in a buckskin suit, and during the day she paraded the streets and in the night time she associated with characters whose light of decency had gone out and who were staggering in the dark face to face with satan. It was here that hell's broth was brewed for Martha Jane Canary, as it was for many another girl. After spending several years in the east Jane returned to the little mining town in the mountains with an "education" that was not only surprising but shocking to her former friends and associates. With her other habits and vices she had acquired a restless, roaming, venture-some disposition, and it is claimed in 1870 she entered into service for the government as an Indian scout, and on account of her daring intrepidity, her rapidity of movement and deadly skill with firearms, as well as the qualities displayed as a rider, the Indians considered her as possessed of supernatural powers. Colonel Wm. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) said that she was given the doleful name of "Calamity Jane" in 1872 by Captain Egan, then commander of the United States army post at Goose Creek, whose life she saved. The captain was shot by the Indians and was in danger of death when the female scout came up on her horse, shot the Indian nearest the wounded and unconscious officer, placed him in front of her on her horse and carried him to the fort and then nursed him back to health. When Captain Egan learned of his rescue he said to his preserver: "You are a good person to have around in time of calamity, and I now christen you 'Calamity Jane, the heroine of the plains.' "

It is also claimed that she was the first white woman to enter the Black Hills country, having gone into that country with Prof. Jenney's military escort in 1875. By this time she had developed into a very masculine type of woman, and so nearly did her features and form conform to those of a man, that, when attired in men's clothing, she had little difficulty in passing as a man among strangers. She was what was then termed "a good scout"; she smoked, drank whiskey, gambled, frequented the dance halls, and fought her fights and swore as the men did in those days. But with all her vices and faults it is said she had one astounding virtue—charity. She held the cup of water to the lips of many a dying pioneer; she nursed the sick for days and weeks, and emptied her purse for many a person who was in destitute circumstances. In this respect she was the "good Samaritan" of a motley crowd and many of that crowd revered her memory in return for charity or her nursing care. In the presence of suffering and sickness she was as sympathetic, tender, charitable and kind as a ministering angel, and although her masculine traits were abnormal, her womanly traits of kindness and charity would have done credit to millions of her sex. Although she was a liberal, kind-hearted

person, always ready and willing to divide her worldly means with any one in need, on the other hand, she never hesitated to take anything from anyone, of which she stood in need.

In 1876 she saved the lives of six passengers and the driver of a stage coach traveling from Deadwood, South Dakota, to Wild Birch. The stage was held up by a small band of Indians, and the driver, Jack McCaul, was shot and wounded. None of the six men in the stage coach had the nerve to come out, but Jane came out, mounted the driver's seat and brought the stage with safety to Wild Birch. Jack McCaul recovered from his wound and some time later, while in Deadwood, shot and killed Wild Bill (Bill Hickok). It is said that it was a cold-blooded murder, and in a very short time McCaul's body was swinging at the end of a rope which had been fastened to the limb of a tree, and that "Calamity Jane" was the one who captured McCaul and was the leader of the mob that hanged him.

From the Black Hills Jane drifted back to Wyoming and lived in Cheyenne in the early '80's. From Cheyenne she went to Rawlins, then to Lander, and then back to Rawlins. She came to Casper October 8, 1889, and on October 11 of that year an item appeared in the *Casper Weekly Mail* to the effect that, "The village is comparatively quiet of late. No shooting, yelling or carousing, and were it not for the occasional musical notes of 'Calamity Jane,' our streets would be as orderly as any eastern city."

She came to Fort Fetterman on the stage from Rock Creek in the summer of 1886 and from Fort Fetterman she went to the then new town of Douglas. Douglas was the terminus of the railroad and was filled with men who generally came to the new western towns and remained as long as money was easy to get and liquor flowed freely. It was with this character of men that Jane was at home.

Jeff Crawford was operating the stage line from Fetterman to Douglas at that time and Jane made the trip to Douglas on his stage. She insisted upon occupying the seat over the front boot of the coach and, as was her custom, she had with her a plentiful supply of whiskey, which she drank as she traveled along the rough road, to wash the dust from her throat and at the same time lend cheer and courage to endure the jolts of the rickety, rocking stage coach. On this trip, in addition to her supply of whiskey, she took with her a basketful of grapes and she ate grapes and drank whiskey as she traveled along the route. Her dress was of the Dollie Varden variety, dotted with pretty red flowers, and she also wore a red straw hat with a red feather in it. While fording the Platte river near Fetterman the stage went into the water up to the seat where Jane was sitting and the water caused the colors in her dress to "run." The dust along the roadside did not add



to the appearance of the dress or the woman, and when the stage arrived in Douglas, Jane, with her dress of many colors, with her face and hands besmeared with grime and grape juice, with bedraggled hair, bleared eyes and sunburnt face, was a spectacle that caused many men to surround her and pass remarks not considered complimentary or pleasing to the new arrival. What she said to her tormentors need not go down in history.

She made her headquarters in Douglas and Fetterman for a year or so, then returned to the towns along the Union Pacific railroad. She was married in Rawlins to a man named Bill Steers, but as was to be expected, the couple soon separated. From Rawlins she came to Casper on the date given above. Casper was too quiet for her, although at that time the town bore a name as unenviable as even Calamity herself could wish for. From here she went to some of the soldiers' camps in the interior and finally went to Billings, Montana, in 1895. She had her biography written in that town and published, but the sale of the book did not meet her hopes and expectations and she then attempted to operate a hand laundry, but this was no more of a success and brought no better returns than the sale of her book. Then she returned to the Black Hills, the scenes of her early and gayer life. By this time she was too old to travel the pace. She had postcards made from a photograph of herself taken in her early days when she was an Indian scout. Her hair was cut short, she wore a fringed buckskin suit and she was holding in her hand a rifle. These pictures were put on sale in a number of Black Hills towns and from the sales she derived a small profit.

Some people say that she rode on the range as a cowboy and later acted as an Indian scout under General Crook at Fort Kearney, where she displayed wonderful tact and cunning and prevented many contemplated attacks by the Indians upon the white men; that she had a wealth of knowledge and was familiar with the best of the social graces, and was as much at home in a fine parlor as she was on the range. It is possible that the good things said of her may have been true, but the marked transformation of her appearance, her actions, and her achievements after she returned to Wyoming from the Black Hills lead those who knew her to doubt that since her maturity she ever graced a parlor, unless a western dance hall could be called such, and that her wealth of knowledge was not acquired in college, and that her social graces were along different lines from those of a refined, courtly, polished, genteel woman.

She lived in Lead, South Dakota, most of the time after she last returned to the Black Hills country, and in the summer of 1903 she closed her eyes in her last sleep, and her remains were interred beside



those of Bill Hickok, who was known as “Wild Bill,” and who met his death as described above. Her funeral was attended by many of the old-timers from Wyoming, Montana and the Dakotas, and was said to be the largest funeral cortege of any in the Black Hills. Thus ended the career of Martha Jane Canary-Hickok-Steers-King-Burke, alias “Calamity Jane,” the woman whose euphemistic name and peculiar characteristics brought her into the limelight more than any other woman who has ever lived in the Middle West.

## Landmarks of the Old Oregon Trail

**L**ANDMARKS of the Old Oregon Trail in Natrona county probably are more numerous and of more importance and interest than those of any other county in any state along the 2,000-mile route. The emigrants had trekked about 800 miles by the time they reached here, and the last 200 or 300 miles of that distance was generally the most trying part of their journey, for the reason that when the travelers left Independence, Missouri, their starting point, they were inexperienced in this mode of travel; the life they were compelled to lead was entirely new to them, and the country and conditions were changed from an easy-going home life on the farm or in the shop to one full of adventure, full of excitement and full of hardships.

By the time they had reached the country that is now Central Wyoming they had been on the road fully three months, and in that time the oxen and horses had commenced to feel the effects of the strenuousness of the trip, the wagons and carts had begun to show the effects of the rough and rugged roads; the dust and sand were deep and stifling, and the scorching sun made traveling almost unendurable. It was here that the men, women and children, through privation, neglect and hardships, were reduced in health; it was here that the Indians proved the greatest menace, and it was here that disease took its greatest toll.

The migration to the Oregon Country was begun in 1840 and continued until 1843, after which only a few scattering parties wended their way to the new country in the Far West until the Mormons started on their pilgrimage in 1847; the California gold seekers traveled over the same route from Independence and branched off to California at Fort Hall in 1849-50, but in 1852 the greatest rush of homeseekers to the Oregon Country took place that the world has ever known.

Bancroft says that "in 1841 passed the forts the first deliberate emigration to Oregon and California of men, women and children—fifteen in number. These were Joel P. Walker, wife, sister, three sons and two daughters; Burrows, wife and child; Warfield, wife and child, and one Nichols. The same year passed Bidwell's California company. Mrs. Kelsey was the only woman in the Bidwell party, and arrived in California a little later than Mrs. Walker, though the Walker company went by the way of Oregon. In 1842 Elija White's

Oregon company of 112 men, women and children and a train of eighteen great Pennsylvania wagons, cattle, packmules and horses. Bouideau was in charge of Fort Laramie at that time and gave the emigrants timely advice and assistance, although they grumbled much at the price of provisions in the mountains. The trappers had done the same before them . . . In 1843 passed the fur company's posts an army of occupation destined for the Columbia river, consisting of 1,000 men, women and children, with draft cattle, herds of cows and horses, farming implements and household goods. After this, things were never to be as they were aforetime in the hunting grounds of the Rocky mountains. The beaver were all but exterminated; few trappers remained; the Indians were, if not more hostile, at least better armed and more dangerous; immigration westward increased; the state of Deseret was planted on our border; and in a few years gold was discovered in California, after which the great highway became like a vast human river, dividing the continent in twain, and bearing on its bosom what argosies of human hopes, alas! how often wrecked."

The question has often been asked: "Who laid out the Oregon Trail?" and it may be truthfully answered that nobody knows. There is not a single name or date or event that can be traced or given credit for the history of the beginning of the old Trail. It was just a natural highway, which followed the line of the least resistance from Independence, Missouri, to Vancouver, Oregon. The routes along the water courses were the paths which were first made by the buffalo and the elk and the other wild animals; these paths were followed by the Indians, then the fur trappers and traders, then the missionaries and explorers, and then the homeseekers and prospectors. The slowly moving wagon trains, with their ox teams, measuring their weary steps, the men, women and children huddling in the shelter of the white-topped wagons with hope in their breasts and care on their faces, traveling on and on for days and weeks and months, through the pelting rains in the early spring, through the sweltering sun in the summer months and through the biting snow storms in the fall of the year from 1840 until 1869, were the ones who made the Trail, but they did not lay it out. The thousands of wagons and the tens of thousands of horses and oxen wore a pathway in many places several hundred feet in width, stretching for miles and miles across the plains, and today, after more than fifty years since the Trail was abandoned, there are many places along the route more than twenty feet deep, the earth having been ground out by the tires of the wagons and the feet of the horses and cattle, and afterwards the pulverized soil was blown out by the winds. The starting point of the Oregon Trail and the

Santa Fé Trail was the same. The two trails pursued the same course for forty-one miles, then they forked, the Santa Fé heading in a southwesterly direction and the Oregon Trail to the northwest. At the forks of the roads, where the town of Gardner, Kansas, now stands, was a sign board pointing to the northwest with the simple lettering: "Road to Oregon." That sign board today would be worth its weight in gold to any historical society, but like the thousands of other landmarks along the route that were made by the hand of man, they are lost and gone forever, and only the marks created by the hand of God, like Emigrant Gap, Independence Rock, Devil's Gate and many others, are still standing and will forever remain unchanged.

Brigham Young, with his company of Mormons, consisting of 144 men, three women and two children, camped on or near the ground where the city of Casper is now situated on June 12-13, 1847. Besides the men, women and children, the train consisted of seventy-two wagons, sixty-six oxen, eighty-nine horses, fifty-two mules, nineteen cows and seventeen dogs. An invoice of the provisions when they started on their journey showed 1,228 pounds of flour, 865 pounds of meat, 296 pounds of beans, 2,869 pounds of corn, 50 pounds of garden seed, and many other articles too numerous to be listed here.

This train started for Salt Lake from "Winter Quarters," where Florence, Nebraska, is now situated, on April 8, 1847.<sup>1</sup> In the party there were mechanics of all kinds, farmers, engineers, school teachers, merchants, doctors, and men of other professions. The previous year a party of six men had made an exploration of the Far West to select a place for the Mormons, who had practically been driven out of their headquarters at Nauvoo, Illinois. These six men spent more than a month in the Salt Lake valley, and in the fall returned with maps, a description of the soil and the climate and general conditions. Upon their recommendation, Salt Lake was decided upon as their "promised land."

The camp rules adopted for the train before starting over the Trail, provided that there should be bugle sound at 5 o'clock each morning, when all should arise and pray, attend the teams, get breakfast, and be ready to travel at 7 o'clock. All must start and keep together. Each extra man must travel on the off side of his team with a loaded gun on his shoulder. All guns and pistols must be kept in perfect order. Each driver must have his gun placed so he could get it at a moment's warning. The camp should travel in close order and no man should leave camp for a distance of more than twenty rods. No one would be indulged in idleness. The cannon should bring up the rear and the company guard attend to it, traveling with the gun.

<sup>1</sup> Egan's "Pioneering the West."

The camp would halt one hour for dinner at noon; when the camp halted for the night, all wagons were to be drawn in a circle and the horses secured inside the circle. The bugle was to be sounded at 8:30, when every man was to be at his wagon to pray, and all fires must be put out.

The train encountered rain and snow storms for the first few weeks, but the people experienced no real hardships then. They found plenty of game along the road which furnished them with excitement as well as meat to eat. After being out about a month some of the men indulged in dancing, playing cards and checkers, gambling, swearing at each other and some had quarreled, all of which was breeding discontent and hampered the progress of the train. Brigham Young tolerated this in silence until he reached a point about twenty-four miles east of Fort Laramie where, on the morning of May 29, he assembled the members of the train in a semi-circle around him and gave them a lecture, and among other things he said: "There are several men in camp who do not belong to the church. I am a man who will stand up for them and protect them in their rights; but they shall not trample on the rights of others. If they set up their heads and seek to introduce iniquity into this camp, I swear to them they shall never go back to tell the tale; I will leave them where they will be safe. If they want to return they can now have the privilege of doing so before we go farther.

"I am one of the last to ask my brethren to enter into a solemn covenant, but if they will not enter into a solemn covenant to put away their iniquity, and turn to the Lord and serve Him, and acknowledge and honor His name, I want them to take their wagons and turn back, for I shall not go any farther under this state of things. Now, let every man repent of his weakness, of his follies, of his meanness, and every kind of wickedness, and stop swearing. . . . I tell you if you do not stop it, you shall be cursed by the Almighty, and shall dwindle away and be damned. Such things shall not be suffered in this camp."

The high priests, the bishops, the seventies, the elders, and the brethren of the twelve were then called forward and they all said they were willing to covenant to turn to the Lord with all their hearts, to repent of their follies and to cease from all their evils. Those who were not members of the church agreed not to trample on the rights of the church, to refrain from blasphemy and to conduct themselves well. After the lecture, the covenants and the promises everybody felt better, and the train proceeded on its westward journey.

They reached a point opposite Fort Laramie on June 1 and on June 3 they crossed the river with their wagons on a flat boat to the

fort, where they found a small party of Mormons from Pueblo waiting to accompany them to Salt Lake. From Fort Laramie a delegation was sent out on the road toward Pueblo to meet another train of Mormons and guide them on their way.

The first division of the main train arrived at the river crossing about three miles east from where Casper is now situated on June 11. This crossing was near where the W. T. Evans ranch is now located. The Reshaw bridge was afterwards built at this point. Arrangements were made with the ferryman to take some of the wagons across the river, but many in the first division and nearly all in the divisions that closely followed, came farther west to the spot about where Casper is located and camped over Sunday, which was June 13. Some of the party went to the mountains and killed a grizzly bear and three cubs, and on the plains before they reached the mountains, they killed three buffaloes and two antelope. Two of the men who started for the mountains at about 5 o'clock in the evening, thinking they could go there and back by 8 o'clock, did not return until 11 o'clock, the distance being more than twice that which they expected.

Monday morning, June 14, the men commenced ferrying their provisions across the river at a point where the Platte bridge was afterwards built, about one and one-half miles west from Casper, but the current was so strong it was considered unsafe to take the provisions over in a raft, and accordingly, a rope was strung across the stream and two wagons were lashed together, then fastened to the rope, and then an attempt was made to float them across, but when the wheels of the wagon struck the sand on the opposite side, the current was so strong one of the wagons was rolled over and considerable damage was done. Four wagons were then lashed together abreast with poles strung on the sides and on the ends and in this manner they succeeded in getting across without accident. The men worked from Monday morning until Friday morning before all the wagons, stock and provisions were gotten across the river. The weather was very cold and a gale of wind prevailed from the southwest during the entire time the party was engaged in crossing the stream. A number of men were delegated to remain at the river to assist the others across the stream who were expected along in a few days.

Saturday morning, the 19th, the train proceeded on its journey and in the evening arrived at a "steep descent from a bluff and at the foot there is a ridge of sharp-pointed rocks running parallel with the road for nearly a quarter of a mile, leaving only a narrow space for the wagons to pass, and the road is very rough." This was Emigrant Gap, and the condition of the road has been not much improved the past seventy-five years.



The train arrived at Sweetwater river about a mile east from Independence Rock, on June 21, the distance from the upper ferry on the Platte river being forty-nine miles. This country was described as having "many huge hills, or ridges, and masses of granite rock, all destitute of vegetation, and presenting a very wild and desolate as well as romantic appearance. Hundreds of persons who visited this rock (Independence) have painted their names there with different colored paint." The train did not camp at Independence Rock, but proceeded to Devil's Gate, near where they camped for the night.

The train traveled up the Sweetwater river and on the 26th crossed the South Pass. On the 28th, at 6 o'clock in the evening, they met Jim Bridger, who, with two companions, was going to Fort John (Laramie) from Fort Bridger. Brigham Young was anxious to secure information from Bridger concerning the Salt Lake valley and he ordered the train to halt and camp for the night. Bridger had the reputation of being the best informed guide in the Rocky Mountain country, but the Mormon leader evidently thought much less of him after the interview than he did before he met him, for in Egan's diary it is written: "It is impossible to form a correct idea from the very imperfect and irregular way in which he (Bridger) gave the description. From his conversation, I should not take him to be a man of truth, for in his description of the country he crossed himself a number of times, and it is my opinion that we cannot depend upon it until we see for ourselves." Bridger had nothing good to say about the Salt Lake region, but the Mormons were not inclined to change their purpose of making their homes in the Salt Lake valley and proceeded on their way. The first section of the train arrived at Salt Lake July 21, and on the 22d the main body arrived, but Brigham Young, who had been sick, did not arrive until the 24th. At first the Mormons were not favorably impressed with the Salt Lake valley, but Brigham Young assured his people that the soil was rich and when grain was planted it would grow. He explained how the crops could be irrigated and encouraged the men to select tracts of land and build homes for themselves. Although the season was late, some crops were put in and although the harvest in the fall was not as bountiful as it would have been had the seed been planted earlier, it proved that crops would grow, and the people felt greatly encouraged. Trains continued to come in during that summer and fall and when winter set in Salt Lake City boasted a population of 2,095.

"During the summer of 1848 a considerable amount of land was ploughed and potatoes and other crops planted. Every effort was made to produce enough to feed the people during the following

winter. Just at the time when the crops were the most promising, millions of crickets appeared and commenced to devour everything, and settlers saw starvation staring them in the face. Fortunately, gulls from the lake came and devoured the crickets, which was regarded as an act of Providence for the protection of the chosen people who had come to occupy the promised land.

"The years following brought large additions to the Mormon colony in Utah, and a number of counties were organized. The tireless head of the church kept agents not only in the eastern states, but in Europe, asking people to join the Mormon settlement and the church. Some of these people located around Fort Bridger, others along the North Platte, and at one time it was thought that the southwestern portion of Wyoming would become Mormon territory. Had not Brigham Young refused to acknowledge federal authority and forced the government to send Albert Sidney Johnston with five regiments out to subdue the Mormons, a portion of our state would undoubtedly have remained a part of Utah. This trouble with the Mormons induced the general government to reduce the size of their territory and accordingly Nevada was taken off the west, a considerable strip lying west of the mountains was put into Colorado, and a smaller portion makes up the southwest corner of Wyoming."<sup>1</sup>

The Mormons started across the "Great American desert" for their "land of promise" about five years previous to the time originally planned. When they were compelled to leave Nauvoo, Illinois, in the early spring of 1846, the procession consisted of about 2,000 wagons and 15,000 people. They proceeded across the state of Iowa, and on June 14, the advance guard, under the leadership of Brigham Young, arrived at the Missouri river, opposite to where Omaha is now located, where "Camp Israel" was established until a ferry boat could be built in which the people and the teams could be taken across the stream. An agreement was made between the Mormons and the Omaha Indians to the effect that the Mormons should be allowed to establish homes and farm the land for a period of five years, and it was here that "Winter Quarters" were located. Several hundred log cabins, and about one hundred sod houses and a large council house were erected by the Mormons, and mills and workshops were built and operated. Crops of grain were planted in the summer and harvested in the fall. On account of the industrial activity of the Mormons a great deal of the timber close at hand was consumed and the game was driven from the country. The Indians were dissatisfied with their bargain and made complaint to the authorities at Washington, and the Mormons were ordered to vacate the Omaha country.

<sup>1</sup> Coutant's "History of Wyoming."

On January 14, 1847, Brigham Young appointed Oliver P. Gleason, George Chatelaine, Miles Bragg, J. P. Johnson, Solomon Silver and William Hall as a committee to proceed westward and select a site for a new settlement. This committee reached Fort Laramie in the early spring, and at that place they were advised to proceed to the Great Salt Lake valley.

At "Winter Quarters" preparations were being made to comply with the order from the Indian department to vacate the land upon which they had settled under an agreement with the Indians, and on April 8, Brigham Young and his party, as above mentioned, started over the long trail upon which thousands of his followers came in after years, and helped to build up one of the most prosperous countries in the west.

The Fremont Trail, the Oregon Trail, the Mormon Trail, the California Trail and the Overland Route from Independence, or Westport, to the Oregon Country from 1840 until 1862 were practically the same. About the only difference was in the names. It is estimated that if all the people who died along this Trail between the years of 1840 and 1869 were buried an equal distance apart there would be a grave at least every fourth of a mile of the entire 2,000 miles. It is estimated that more than 5,000 people died along this route in one year. While there were many deaths among the emigrants, the Mormons undoubtedly suffered the greatest loss, due mostly to hardships, exposure and being unprepared for the ordeal with either food or clothing or proper means of transportation. Many of the Mormons started out on the long journey on foot, dragging or pushing a handcart which contained all their earthly possessions, which of course included their clothing and means of sustenance. In one party in 1856, which was known as the "Handcart Brigade," there were more than 600 people, men, women and children, who started from Saint Joseph, Missouri, in the late summer months for Salt Lake City, and by the time they reached what is now Natrona county they were overtaken by the severe snow storms of early winter, and more than half of them died and were buried along the roadside.<sup>1</sup>

The Indians were responsible for a great many deaths among the emigrants. The lazy savages would go on the war path nearly every spring, leaving death and destruction in their path. Between the points where Casper is now located and the South Pass was the favorite "hunting ground" of the "noble red man." When there were no emigrants along the route to be robbed they attacked the mail coaches.

<sup>1</sup>A description of the hardships endured by these poor people will be found in this volume under the heading of "Devil's Gate."

On account the Indian depredations along that part of the Trail then commonly called the North Platte and Sweetwater divisions, which included all that part of the route from what is now the extreme eastern part of Wyoming to South Pass, the Overland route was changed by the mail contractors in 1862, and the Trail up the North Platte river to the Sweetwater and across to South Pass was abandoned, and the new road switched off at North Platte, Nebraska, going in a southerly direction via Fort Sedgwick, Fort Collins, Fort Sanders, Fort Halleck, across the Laramie Plains, then due west through Bridger Pass, and again connected with the Oregon Trail at a point a few miles east from Fort Bridger.

When the change in this route was being made from the North Platte and Sweetwater course to the southern route, the rolling stock, horses and other property of the company was gathered at the station just above Devil's Gate. Company A, of the Eleventh Ohio cavalry, with Major O'Farrell in command, was the escort at the time. The first day the long train of coaches, wagons, horses and mules made eleven miles from the station where the property had been gathered. The route chosen was south from the Sweetwater station. In the evening a camp was selected where there was a fine spring of water and plenty of wood. Shortly after going into camp the officer in charge discovered that a number of the soldiers showed the effects of strong drink. The soldiers were doing escort duty for not only the stage company's property but a number of emigrants who had availed themselves of the opportunity for safe conduct. Orders were given to search all the wagons and if whiskey was found to destroy it. A barrel of whiskey was soon found in one of the wagons. It was rolled out, the head of the barrel was knocked in and the liquid was poured out on the ground. The spot where the whiskey was emptied was just above the spring, and what did not soak in the ground found its way to the spring. The soldiers and some of the others lost no time in rushing forward with cups, canteens, buckets, camp kettles and anything else that came handy to save what they could of the whiskey. Those who did not succeed in getting anything to scoop up the whiskey stamped their boot heels into the ground and caught the liquor in the hole, and lying down on their bellies drank what they could of it. It was not long until more than half the company commenced to show the effects of their overindulgence. One of the soldiers who had succeeded in filling his canteen as well as his stomach, assured the commanding officer that that was the finest spring he had ever seen and the best water he had ever drank. It was feared that the Indians would make an attack on the party that night, and there were scarcely enough sober men in camp to do guard duty. The Indians did not

show up, however, and the next morning the men had slept off the effects of their intoxication. The gap in the mountains up to that time had not been named, and the soldiers, afterwards, in referring to it, called it Whiskey Gap, and the name has clung to it ever since, and more than likely will never be changed.

Although the mail route was changed, the old Trail was by no means abandoned, for the emigrants continued to travel this route and the telegraph line was maintained by the government, but the emigrants were not given as much protection by the government in this division as they were before the mail route was changed, and the marauding Indians became more reckless and bloodthirsty, and a great number of the emigrants were robbed and many of them were murdered. It was claimed that the Mormons were encouraging the Indians in their depredations.

On the 3rd of April, 1863, a band of Indians attacked the Sweetwater station, near Independence Rock, making a furious assault, but they were finally driven off after having dangerously wounded one soldier. There were twenty-six soldiers at the station at the time this attack took place. On April 13 Major Connor sent a telegram to General Halleck, saying: "Unless immediately reinforced with cavalry, the Indians, urged on by Mormons, will break up the Overland mail and make the emigrant road impassable," and on April 28, the general, who was then stationed at Fort Bridger, in writing to the Department of the Pacific, said: "The Indians are congregating in large force in the vicinity of the Mormon settlements, with a view of depredating on the Overland mail and emigrant routes, and are incited and encouraged in the hellish work by Brigham Young, by whose direction they are also supplied with food, and by his people with ammunition. . . . Brigham Young has complete control of the Indians of the territory and could, if he chose, prevent the horrors that will soon be enacted on the Overland route." Shortly after this letter was written Major Connor was reinforced with four companies, who had a number of sharp battles with the Indians with such telling effect that the mail route and the emigrants were disturbed but very little by the savages during the remainder of the summer months of that year.

The route up the North Platte and Sweetwater rivers was the pathway for the emigrants until 1869, when the Union Pacific railway, built through to the western coast, made the Trail no longer a practical one to the Oregon Country and California. From Independence to Vancouver over this route the distance was 2,020 miles, and it is said to have been the longest road in the world excepting the Siberian road in Russia. No engineer ever placed his rod or transit on this



trail; no grades were ever established on it; yet lacking all the modern methods of road construction, the Oregon Trail is said to have been not only the longest, but the finest highway in the world.

There were no signs along this route to warn the traveler of a dangerous curve or a perilous crossing, and none was needed. The deep tracks made by the wagons which were hauled and trailed by the horses and oxen were all the signs that were necessary. After branching off to the northwest forty-one miles from the starting point, with almost two thousand miles ahead, there was a well-defined route, the entire distance of which was bordered with the skeletons of many of the beasts of burden which had fallen along the wayside, and there were also many, many little mounds with the crude head-board which told the piteous story of a father, mother or little child who was unable to endure the untold hardships and sufferings, and the wild winds of the plains chanted the funeral requiem over the lonely and deserted graves.

For many years, after railroads had been established to the Far West, and traveling across the plains in a covered wagon had been abandoned, the old Trail was neglected and the numerous graves were passed by unnoticed, but at the 1913 session of the Wyoming State legislature an appropriation was made and the Wyoming Oregon Trail Commission, consisting of three members, was established for the purpose of putting markers and monuments along the old Trail in this state, and every county in the state through which the Trail passed was provided with these markers which were located and set up by the board of county commissioners, and thus a grateful people who are now enjoying the blessings of our modern civilization have made the Old Trail imperishable and unforgotten.

Natrona county was furnished three of these markers, one of which was set up by the board of county commissioners and the members of the local D. A. R., on the old Trail about one and one-half miles west from the city of Casper, on July 5, 1920, another was set up at Independence Rock on July 4, 1920, under the direction of the same bodies. The other marker is lying beside the old abandoned road about one-fourth of a mile west from the Standard Oil company's refineries, but will be set up on the site of old Fort Caspar.

The route of the old Trail through what is now Natrona county in the early '40's was on the north side of the river, but when the water in the river was low the emigrants came up on the south side of the stream to a point about three miles east from where the city of Casper is now situated. The Reshaw bridge was afterwards built at this ford. There was another ford about five miles farther west from the Reshaw bridge which was in 1847 called the Mormon Ferry, and



afterwards known as the Platte Bridge station and later was named Fort Caspar. After crossing the river at either of these fords the emigrants proceeded in a westerly direction through Emigrant Gap, and on to Fish creek, down Fish creek to where it empties into Horse creek, thence to a point about one mile east from Independence Rock, where the Sweetwater river was crossed; up the Sweetwater past Devil's Gate and on to the west boundary of the Natrona county line. Although there is scarcely any trace of the old Trail on the south side of the river between the crossing three miles to the east of Casper and the one two miles west, due to the building of county roads on each side of the city, the evidence of this wonderful highway is plainly shown on the north side of the river from Casper, and through Emigrant Gap, across Fish creek, and in the Sweetwater valley the main traveled road in many places is in the course of the old Trail.

### CASPER'S PIONEER MONUMENT

The Pioneer monument in the center of the small park directly north of the Chicago & Northwestern railway passenger station in the city of Casper is probably one of the most elaborate and expensive monuments along the old Trail. It was erected in February, 1911, by the ladies of the Natrona County Pioneer association who for several years previous gave entertainments and dinners for the purpose of raising funds with which to purchase the monument, but it was late in 1910 before a sufficient amount of money was secured to insure the ordering of the memorial, which was to cost \$1,500, exclusive of the charges that would have been made for the freight from Indiana or the cost of its erection, both of which were donated by the Northwestern Railway company. The inscription on the south side of the monument is as follows:

PIONEER MONUMENT  
ERECTED ON THE SITE  
OF THE  
OLD OREGON TRAIL  
IN MEMORY OF THE PIONEERS  
WHO BLAZED THE WAY.

BUILT BY  
NATRONA COUNTY PIONEER  
ASSOCIATION

1849

1911

By way of explanation it may be stated that while this monument is located on the Old Oregon Trail, the Trail was also on the north side of the river, the emigrants crossing on the Reshaw bridge, about three miles east from where Casper is now located. This bridge was used exclusively from 1855 until 1859, during the spring and early summer months when the water in the river was so high that the emigrants could not ford the stream. The Mormon Ferry, which received its name in 1847, when Brigham Young and his party built rafts and ferried their wagons and teams and their goods across the river, was at the point where the Platte bridge, about one and one-half miles west from Casper, was built in the fall and winter of 1858-9 and the Trail was then permanently established from Fort Laramie to this point on the south side of the river. This Trail on the south side was fully half a mile wide, but where the monument stands was no doubt somewhere near its center. Before the Reshaw bridge was built there was considerable travel on the north side of the river all the way up, especially when the water in the stream was high, and it was a difficult matter to ford across.

The date on the monument, 1849, would indicate that the Oregon Trail was established at that time. This is misleading. From 1840 to 1843 a decided flow of emigrants from the east traveled over the Oregon Trail from Independence, Missouri, to the Columbia river, and thus into the "Oregon Country." American settlers became so numerous in this part of the country that the United States actually laid claim to this region, and after quarreling over it several years, final settlement was made in 1846 between America and England, with definite boundaries between the United States and Canada. The Oregon territory was formed in 1848, therefore it is conclusive that the date on the monument is misleading.

The inscription on the bronze tablet on the east side of the monument is as follows:

FORT CASPAR  
U. S. MILITARY POST  
ESTABLISHED ABOUT 1864  
FOR VOLUNTEERS  
ABANDONED OCTOBER 19, 1867  
SITUATED ONE MILE WEST  
OF THIS SPOT  
MARKED BY THE STATE OF WYOMING  
1914.

In connection with the inscription on this tablet it is to be regretted that another error has been made. According to the records of the War Department, "on July 29, 1858, Companies D and E, Fourth Artillery, Captain Joseph Roberts, Captain G. W. Getty, being a part of the second column of the Utah expedition, occupied this point [which was then known as Mormon Ferry] for the purpose of keeping open the communication with Salt Lake City, and to aid in the prompt forwarding of supplies." An order dated Washington, March 23, 1859, was given to "abandon the post at Platte Bridge." The troops were withdrawn on April 20. There was no more troops stationed at Mormon Ferry, or Platte Bridge, from April 20, 1859, until some time in the month of May, 1862, when it was occupied by volunteer troops who were serving as escort for emigrants and the protection of the telegraph line, and when it was decided, a year or two later, to chastise the Indians, the post was rebuilt to accommodate several companies, the logs being hauled down from Casper mountain, then known as the "Black Hills."

In regard to the changing of the name of the post from Platte Bridge Station to Fort Caspar the order from the War Department is copied elsewhere in this volume in the description of the battle at this point between 3,000 Indians and a small body of soldiers under the command of Lieutenant Caspar W. Collins on July 26, 1865.

Appropriate and impressive unveiling ceremonies of the monument were held November 20, 1914, under the auspices of the Natrona County Pioneer association and the local D. A. R. Prayer was offered by Rev. Hutt; the Natrona County High School Glee club sang "America," an address was made by ex-Governor Bryant B. Brooks and the monument was unveiled by Miss Irma Patton (now Mrs. Silas N. Brooks).

This monument is built from Indiana limestone and is about forty feet in height. The obelisk is in three sections and is twenty-six feet in height from the base, the bottom of which is four feet square and tapers to two and one-half feet square within two feet of the top, where it terminates in a four-square point. There are three sections of the base, each of which is eighteen inches in height, the first being sixteen feet square, the second twelve feet square and the third eight feet square, there being a two-foot offset from each of the sections of the base. Wm. H. Lloyd, who cut the stone for Natrona county's court house, the Masonic Temple and a number of the other public buildings in Casper, cut the inscription on this monument for the Natrona County Pioneer association, and inserted the bronze tablet in the obelisk for the state of Wyoming.

## CASPAR CREEK NAMED

Caspar creek, about one and one-half miles west from the city of Casper, is immediately east from the battle grounds where Lieutenant Caspar W. Collins and a small body of soldiers fought a band of about 3,000 Indians, in an unsuccessful attempt to rescue twenty-six men coming in a wagon train from the Sweetwater country, all of whom were massacred by the Indians. The soldiers, stationed at Platte Bridge station, after the battle, named the stream Caspar creek, and they also named the mountain about eight miles south, Caspar mountain. This mountain was at that time called the Black Hills. In the spelling of this creek and the mountain, an "a" should be used in the last syllable, but custom has changed the "a" to an "e," the same as the city of Casper is spelled. This creek empties into the Platte river about a mile above Casper.

## EMIGRANT GAP

Emigrant Gap, twelve miles west of Casper, on the north side of the North Platte river, is a break on the old Oregon Trail leading into a draw, at the bottom of which flows Poison Spider creek. The emigrants from 1840 to 1869, passed through this breach, it being one of the landmarks on the trail that could not be missed, and as many of the emigrants stopped in the draw for the night, it received its name Emigrant Gap. About eight miles farther along the old Trail, in a southwesterly direction, there is another "gap," on the north side of which is a stretch of rim rock several hundred yards in length and from ten to thirty feet in height, and it is evident that many of the emigrants made this a resting place, and to inform those who came along the route afterwards, among whom may be friends or acquaintances, that they had thus far escaped the fate of so many who had failed to undergo the hardships or the attack of a band of hostile Indians, and had fallen by the wayside, they carved their names on these rocks, which today are as plain as the day they were chiseled in the sandstone, and they will remain visible for centuries. Some of the names and dates thus chiseled on these rocks are: M. Alderson, Ju. 14, 1850. C. Webey, Winchester, Ill., July 19, 1850. B. Mendenhall, 1852. A. W. Wilson, 1859. T. Walker, 1852. W. Mercer, 1862. There are many others, and no doubt all the men who chiseled their names there have long ago been called to the land of their fathers, but the fact that they passed over the old Trail has thus been told and will be read by people who pass that way in centuries to follow.

## HORSE CREEK NAMED

Horse creek is a small stream flowing south and west for a number of miles and joining the Sweetwater river at the old townsite of Bothwell. It was named by the Astorians in about 1823 because along its banks the horses belonging to one of their parties were stolen. Although not convicted of the crime, a man named Rose was accused of planning the theft. Several years before the theft of the horses, Rose was a guide for the Hunt party on its trip across the mountains, but he was an outlaw and renegade and almost succeeded in betraying his expedition into the hands of the Crows, who were not friendly to the fur traders at that time. Rose finally joined the Crow tribe, married one of their women, and adopted their habits. He was a large man, very powerful and bold. He won the favor of the tribe by his desperate daring. At one time he led an attack against an apparently invincible band of Blackfeet. He shot down their leader and then taking his club, killed four others. This earned for him the leadership of the village and he was given the name of Che-ku-kaats, or "the man who killed five." In time the Indians grew jealous of their white idol, whom they began to consider an outsider and an intruder and some seceded from the village. Feuds and civil wars ensued. Rose finally grew tired of the contention between the rival bands and he left them to their own devices and went down the Missouri in 1823. Again he came back through the Green River valley as a guide for a company of trappers. They were under the leadership of Smith, Fitzpatrick, and Sublette. Again he was treacherous, and leading his party into the hands of the Crows, presented the Indians with much of the goods of the expedition. The horses belonging to this party were stolen on the banks of this small stream, which was named Horse creek at that time.

## INDEPENDENCE ROCK

Independence Rock, the "Register of the Desert," is probably the most interesting landmark on the whole of the old Oregon Trail. It was at this spot the weary pilgrims, who traveled by slow-going teams from Independence, Missouri, to the Oregon Country from 1840 till 1869, stopped to rest and refresh themselves. It was here that they found pure, fresh water and an abundance of feed for their stock. It was here that they gathered about the campfires in the evening and sang the old-time songs while the young people danced in the moonlight on the well-beaten area. It was here that they cared for their sick and buried their dead.



This isolated mass of granite stands out on the desert plains at the foot of the Rocky mountain range in the Sweetwater country. When the emigrants reached here from Independence, the starting point on the old Oregon Trail, they had traveled 838 miles, and they considered that they had covered half their journey. The Rock is in Natrona county, 55.3 miles in a southwesterly direction from Casper. It is an immense block of granite resembling a large bowl turned bottom side up, but of irregular shape. The Sweetwater river flows along the southern base and, according to many writers and historians the old Oregon Trail was on the north and west sides of the Rock, where the county road is now located, and the old bridge was supposed to be just east of where the new county bridge was built in 1920. This was not the case, however. The old Oregon Trail crossed the river about a mile east of the Rock, where the Sweetwater stage station was located, and passed by the Rock on the south side of the river, and of course, south of the Rock.

From the very first the emigrants made Independence Rock their camping place and the custom of inscribing on it their names caused Father DeSmet to call it "the great register of the desert." The Indians in the early days came here to paint their picture writing on its smooth walls. It is said to have been named "Rock Independence" by a party of trappers who passed there early in the nineteenth century. It is known that Robert Stuart and his party passed by here in November, 1812.

There is no record of the exact date of the first white men to pass this way, but Rev. Samuel Parker, who was there on the 7th of August, 1835, says, "this rock takes its name from the circumstance of a company of fur traders suspending their journey and here observing, in due form the anniversary of our national freedom." Capt. Bonneville was here on or about the 14th of July, 1832, but the exact date cannot be definitely stated. It must be judged, however, from his notes, that it was about this date, for he says: "On the 12th of July we abandoned the main stream of the Nebraska [now the Platte], which was continually shouldered by rugged promontories, and making a bend to the southwest for a couple of days, part of the time over the plains of loose sand, encamped on the 14th on the banks of the Sweetwater, a stream about twenty yards in breadth and four or five feet deep, flowing between low banks over a sandy soil, and forming one of the forks or upper branches of the Nebraska. Frequently the plains were studded with isolated blocks of rock, sometimes in the shape of a half globe, and from 300 to 400 feet high. These singular masses had occasionally a very imposing and even sublime appearance, rising from the midst of a savage and lonely landscape." Capt.



Bonneville was preceded by Nathaniel Wyeth, who was there during the month of May of the same year. Dr. Marcus Whitman and his bride, who were making their wedding tour as missionaries to the Indians on the Pacific coast, and Rev. H. H. Spalding and his young wife, were at the Rock in 1836. These were the first white women that crossed the Rocky mountains, and, of course, were the first white women to set foot on Independence Rock. The wagon in which they traveled is said by some writers to have been the first wheeled vehicle that crossed the continent, but this is a mistake, for Bonneville's party in 1832, "passed the crest of the Rocky mountains and felt some degree of exultation in being the first individuals that had crossed north of the settled provinces of Mexico, from the waters of the Atlantic to those of the Pacific with wagons."

Father DeSmet was here in 1840, and finding so many names chiseled on the hard granite, he named it the "Register of the Desert." He writes: "It is the first massive rock of that famous mountain chain which divides North America, and which travelers call the backbone of the universe. It is the great register of the desert; the names of all the travelers who have passed by are here to be read, written in coarse characters; mine figures among them as the first priest to visit this remote spot. We cut our names on the south side of the rock with the initials (I. H. S.), which we wish to see engraved everywhere."

John C. Fremont, with Kit Carson as his guide, was here on the 1st of August, 1842, but remained only a few hours. He continued his journey up the Sweetwater, crossed the Continental Divide, camped on the west side of South Pass, and in due time approached the loftiest part of the Wind River chain, and on August 15, with great difficulty and danger, ascended the highest pinnacle of the range, named it "Fremont Peak," and after remaining on the summit of this peak for an hour, returned to his camp in the evening, and the next morning commenced to retrace his steps, and again arrived at Independence Rock on the evening of August 23. It was on this date that he chiseled his name, with the emblem of Christianity, on the Rock, regarding which he says:

"Here, not unmindful of the custom of the early travelers and explorers in our country, I engraved on the rock of the Far West the symbol of the Christian faith. Among the thickly inscribed names, I made on the hard granite the impression of a large cross, deeply engraved, which I covered with a black preparation of India rubber, well calculated to resist the influence of wind and rain. It stands amidst the names of many who have long since found their way to the grave, and for whom the huge rock is a giant gravestone."

There are some people who claim to have seen Fremont's name and the black cross, "the symbol of Christian faith" (which he engraved on the rock), but Coutant's "History of Wyoming" says that "on July 4, 1847, there was a grand celebration at this rock by more than a thousand people, who were on their way to Oregon and California. During the day the enthusiastic American citizens loaded old wagon hubs with powder, to which they fastened a fuse, and exploded them in the crevices of the rock. By this means a large piece of the granite, weighing many tons, was detached and turned over on the ground, and I have been of the opinion that the Fremont cross is on the detached piece of rock and was thus covered from view."

Fremont's name and the cross, which he chiseled on the rock, and is undoubtedly forever hidden from the eye of man, was destined to affect his political fortunes after he returned to the "states." He was a candidate for the presidency in 1856, being the first candidate the republican party had nominated for the nation's chief executive. He was bitterly opposed by the Know Nothing party, and as religious rancor was very strong in those days, his opponents charged that he was a member of the Roman Catholic church, and they offered as proof of their charge the inscription on Independence Rock, and in a campaign pamphlet entitled, "J. C. Fremont's Record Proof of His Romanism," it continued: "Imitating other Roman Catholic explorers, and those alone, in his expedition to the Rocky mountains in 1842, he made on the Rock Independence the sign of the cross, a thing that no Protestant explorer ever did or ever would do. See his own words in Congressional Document 166, of 1845." It was claimed that this Christian emblem was one of the factors that contributed toward his defeat, and this "Register of the Desert," way out on the plains, became an issue in national politics.

Dr. Grace Raymond Hebard, secretary of the Oregon Trail commission of Wyoming, made a visit to this rock in 1915, and she observes that: "When the tide of emigration set in, the Rock, situated here midway of the route, became an important point on the Oregon Trail; like a beacon eagerly looked for by the mariner at sea, the landmark was hailed by the emigrant as it loomed beyond the billowing plain. In those days Independence Rock filled a large place in the minds of the thousands of men and women; today it is by most of us unknown. The records of the monument belong to the history of American travel; more than that, they belong to the history of the building of the republic. The records are fragmentary, found only as incidental notes in the chronicles of time."

In the year 1843 the Oregon Trail first became a great national highway, when a thousand homeseekers passed over the Trail with

their teams, "and each year thereafter," writes Ezra Meeker, "wagon teams passed over the whole route to the Oregon country in varying numbers, wearing the track deeper and deeper, until finally the greater exodus of 1852, when a column of 50,000 strong moved out from the Missouri river and lined the Trail with the dead, 5,000 or more in number for that one year alone. Meanwhile, the Mormon migration had followed in the track of the Oregon pioneers for fully a thousand miles. Fully 300,000 people crossed over what might be termed the 'eastern section' before the advent of the Pacific railroad in 1869, which diverted the later traffic, and the Trail again became a solitude."

Another traveler, who stood on the Rock in 1852, for the "splendid view of the surrounding country," says, "one of the trains forms a line three-quarters of a mile in length; some of the teamsters ride upon the front of their wagons and some march beside their teams; scattered along the line companies of women are taking exercise on foot; they gather bouquets of rare and beautiful flowers that line the way; next come a band of horses; two or three men and boys follow them, the docile and sagacious animals scarce needing this attention, for they have learned to follow in the rear of the wagons, and know that at noon they will be allowed to graze and rest. Their knowledge of time seems as accurate as of the place they are to occupy in the line. Nothing of the moving panorama, smooth and orderly as it appears, has more attraction for the eye than the vast square column in which all colors are mingled, moving here slowly and there briskly, as impelled by horsemen riding fiercely in front and rear. But the picture in its grandeur, its wonderful mingling of colors and distinctness of detail, is forgotten in contemplation of the singular people who give it life and animation. No other race of men with the means at their command would undertake so great a journey; none save these could successfully perform it, with no previous preparation, relying only on the fertility of their own invention to devise the means to overcome each danger and difficulty as it arose. They have undertaken to perform with slow-moving oxen a journey of 2,000 miles. The way lies over trackless wastes, wide and deep rivers, rugged and lofty mountains, and is beset with hostile savages. Yet, whether it were a deep river with no tree on its banks, a rugged defile where even a loose horse could not pass, a hill too steep for him to climb, or a threatened attack of an enemy, they are always found ready and equal to the occasion and always conquerors. May we not call them men of destiny? They are people changed in no essential particulars from their ancestors, who have followed closely on the footsteps of the receding savage, from the Atlantic seaboard to the great valley of the Mississippi."

While in camp four days, on the route in 1852, Ezra Meeker says he saw go by them 1,600 wagons, with a company of 8,000 men, women and children, 10,000 draught animals and 30,000 loose stock, and he knew by the inscribed dates on Independence Rock that there were wagons fully 300 miles ahead of them, and that the throng had continued to pass the river more than a month after they had crossed, so that it does not require a stretch of the imagination to say that the column was 500 miles long, and like Sheridan's march to the sea, 50,000 strong.

"The spot will always be a place of pilgrimage for some, as it ought to be for many," says Dr. Hebard, "who hold in reverence the spirit of their pioneer forbears. For all of us it has been an abiding interest, not only as a landmark on a route of travel, but as a monument associated with a glorious epoch in our country's development—a reminder of the eventful years when an army of Americans, 300,000 strong, marched Westward Ho! to Oregon to make good the title of the United States to the Pacific territory, and to add to the national domain the country which was then Oregon and now is Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

"One cannot grasp or have an adequate conception of this Rock out on the desert, with names carved on it and no sign of life, until one has been there, walked around it, felt of it and traced with his fingers the names that were carved there more than three score years ago and then climbed to the top of it and obtained a sweep of the country along the line of the old Oregon Trail."

Emerson Hough, in his story, "The Covered Wagon," says: "At this point, more than eight hundred miles out from the Missouri, a custom of unknown age seemed to have decreed a pause. The great rock was an unmistakable landmark, and time out of mind had been a register of the wilderness. It carried hundreds of names, including every prominent one ever known in the days of the fur trade or the new day of the wagon trains. It became known as a resting place; indeed, many rested there forever, and never saw the soil of Oregon. Many an emigrant woman, sick well-nigh to death, held out so that she might be buried among the many other graves that clustered there. So, she felt, she had the final company of her kind. And those weak or faint of heart, the news that this was not half way across often smote with despair and death, and they, too, laid themselves down here by the road to Oregon. But there also were many scenes of cheer. By this time the new life of the trail had been taken on, rude and simple. Frolics were promised when the wagons should reach the Rock. Neighbors made reunions there. Weddings, as well as burials, were postponed till the train got to Independence Rock."

After climbing to the summit of this wonderful rock, which has a circumference of 4,656 feet, is 1,950 feet in length, 850 feet wide, 193 feet in height at the north end, 167 feet high at the south end, and covers an area of more than twenty-seven acres, you obtain a magnificent view of the country, a country unlike any other country in this wide, wide world; a country over which dwells the desert silence, not the silence of the peaks and mountains in the distance, nor the silence of the calm on the waters, but it is the silence of interstellar space. Your view covers a land of wide spaces, of simple, strongly marked features, of color and variety, which is clarified and all the more mysterious because it is so clear. It is beautiful with a beauty that no other land has known.

### MASONIC MEETINGS ON INDEPENDENCE ROCK

Two very important meetings have been held on the summit of Independence Rock by members of the Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons. The first meeting was an impromptu gathering which assembled during the early evening of July 4, 1862, and was attended by about twenty Masonic brethren who were in an emigrant train, traveling over the Oregon Trail on their way to the Oregon country. Mr. Asa L. Brown of Platteville, Wisconsin, acted as worshipful master at this meeting, and after the grand lodge of Masons of Wyoming was organized in 1874 he wrote a letter to the grand master, describing this meeting, as follows:

"On July 4, 1862, we had just concluded our arrangements for a celebration on the Rock, when Capt. Kennedy's train from Oskaloosa, Ia., came in, bringing the body of a man who had been accidentally shot and killed that morning. Of course, we all turned out to the burial, deferring our celebration until 4 p. m., at which time we were visited by one of those short, severe storms, peculiar to that locality, which, in the language of some of the boys, "busted the celebration." But some of us determined on having some sort of a celebration, as well as a remembrance of the day and place, and so about the time the sun set in the west, to close the day, about twenty who could vouch, and so to speak, intervouch for each other, wended their way to the summit of the rock, and soon discovered a recess, or rather depression, in the rock, the form and situation of which seemed prepared by nature for our special use.

"An altar of twelve stones was improvised, to which a more thoughtful, or patriotic, traveler added the thirteenth, emblematical of the original colonies, and being elected to the East by acclamation, I was duly installed, i.e., led to the granite seat. The several stations and places were filled, and the tyler, a venerable traveler, with flowing hair and beard of almost snowy whiteness, took his place without the western gate on a little pinnacle, which gave him a perfect command of view for the entire summit of the Rock, so he could easily guard against the approach of all, either ascending or descending. I then informally opened Independence Lodge, No. 1, on the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason, when several of the brethren made short, appropriate addresses, and our venerable tyler gave us reminiscences of his early Masonic history, extending from 1821 to 1862. Having gone up, provided with fluid extract of rye, 'sweetwater,' sugar and citric acid, the craft was



called to labor for refreshment, a bucketful of which was prepared and Masonic and patriotic impromptu toasts and responses were indulged in, after which the craft resumed labor and the lodge was duly closed."


In a letter written several months later Mr. Brown stated to the grand master of Masons in Wyoming that he had secured the Bible which was used on the altar at this meeting, and he was sending it to him, together with the jewels worn by the officers and the emblems used on the Bible at that time, which he hoped would have "an abiding place" in the archives of the grand lodge of Wyoming.

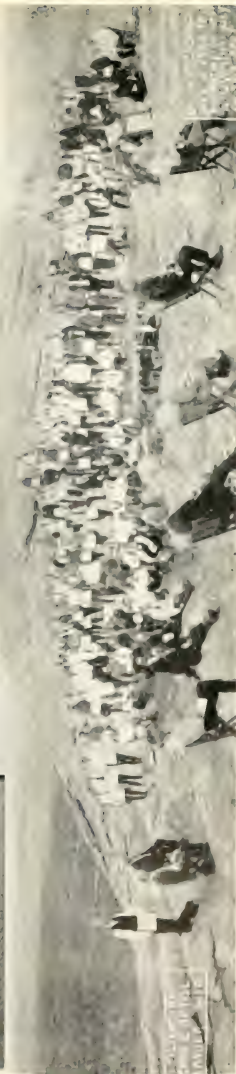
In connection with this meeting, it may be stated that the jewels the officers wore were cut from tin cans, the square and compasses, as emblems of the fraternity, were cut from a pasteboard box, and the Holy Bible which rested on the altar was a volume of the "Old and New Testaments, Translated Out of the Original Tongues," it being published in the year 1857. The volume was presented by Mrs. Jannette Parkhurst and R. P. Parkhurst to Edwin Bruce and Edwin Bruce in turn presented it to Mr. Brown at Platteville, Wis., August 15, 1858.

The Masonic lodge at Rawlins had possession of the Bible, emblems and jewels for several years, but later they were taken to Cheyenne where they were kept in the Masonic Temple. The temple was burned and the emblems and jewels were consumed at that time. The Bible, however, was among the few articles that were carried from the burning building and it was picked up in the street and returned without being damaged. This Bible is now in the possession of Grand Secretary Joseph M. Lowndes of Casper, and no doubt always will remain the property of the Grand Masonic lodge of Wyoming, as was requested by Mr. Brown.

In commemoration of the meeting above described another Masonic meeting was held on the Rock on July 4, 1920, by Casper Masonic lodge No. 15, in the same depression where the meeting was held fifty-two years before. The altar and stations of the officers were built from stones similar to those used by the brethren in the early days, and the same Bible that was used fifty-two years before was used on the altar at this meeting. There were more than 200 Master Masons in attendance, a majority of the lodges in the state being represented, and many of the states in the Union were also represented, and there were several members from Scotland, one from the Philippine Islands, and one from Alaska. A number of the officers of the grand lodge of Wyoming were also present. The following officers presided at this meeting: Worshipful Master, Charles H. Townsend; Senior Warden, Marion P. Wheeler; Junior Warden, Harold Banner; Senior Deacon, Wilson S. Kimball; Junior Deacon,




 THE FIRST LODGE OF MASONS IN ARIZONA IS  
 FOR THE STATE OF ARIZONA WAS ORGANIZED  
 ON FEBRUARY 10, 1891, AT THE CITY OF  
 TUCSON, ARIZONA. THE LODGE HAS SINCE  
 GROWN TO BE ONE OF THE MOST ACTIVE  
 AND IMPORTANT OF THE STATE. THE  
 LODGE HAS BEEN A SUCCESSFUL ONE IN  
 PROMOTING THE INTERESTS OF THE  
 STATE AND THE COUNTRY.



MASSONS MEMORIAL SERVICE AT INDEPENDENCE ROCK, WYOMING, JULY 4, 1920. JOHN CAMPBELL MORTIMER  
 TABLE ATTACHED TO THE ROCK



Peter C. Nicolaysen; Senior Steward, Bryant B. Brooks; Junior Steward, William O. Wilson; Tyler, Alfred J. Mokler; Treasurer, John T. Scott; Secretary, Elbert M. Hambright; Chaplain, Louis A. Reed; Orator, William A. Riner. After the lodge had been opened in due form and the special dispensation from the grand lodge had been read giving permission for the meeting to be held, short addresses were made by C. H. Townsend of Casper, A. K. Lee of Thermopolis, F. G. Burnett of Lander, Wm. Daley, of Rawlins, C. S. Bell of Billings, Montana; and A. J. Mokler of Casper gave a brief historical sketch of the meeting held in 1862, together with a description of the Rock and its importance as a resting place for the emigrants in the early days. The lodge was then closed in form and the members adjourned to the north end of the Rock where a granite marker for the old Oregon Trail was unveiled under the auspices of the Casper D. A. R. and the Oregon Trail commission of Wyoming, and a bronze tablet which had been imbedded in the rock by the Casper Masonic lodge was unveiled. There were about 500 people present, and William A. Riner of Cheyenne and Arthur K. Lee of Thermopolis made the principal addresses.

A minute report of this meeting may be found in the 1920 Masonic Grand Lodge proceedings.

Since the Masonic order held its celebration on Independence Rock on July 4, 1920, and imbedded a bronze tablet in the granite mass, Henry D. Schoonmaker, a pioneer of Natrona county and at one time owner of the land surrounding the Rock, has placed a tablet alongside the Masonic tablet. This tablet measures 24 x 36 inches and bears these interesting historical facts:

#### INDEPENDENCE ROCK.

Probably discovered by returning Astorians, 1812. Given its name by emigrants who celebrated Independence day here July 4, 1825. Captain Bonneville passed here with first wagons, 1832. Whitman and Spaulding, missionaries, with wives, stopped here, 1836. Father DeSmet saw it and owing to many names upon it called it the "Register of the Desert," 1840. Gen. John C. Fremont camped here with U. S. army, Aug. 2, 1842. Fifty thousand emigrants passed here in 1853. It is the most famous landmark on the

#### OLD OREGON TRAIL.

Under the tablet carved in the granite are the words, "This tablet presented and placed by Henry D. Schoonmaker, 1920."

A great many gatherings of a public nature, Fourth of July celebrations and picnics have been held at this Rock since the flow of emigration ceased to pass that way, and it no doubt will always be a place where the people living in the vicinity will congregate for their celebrations, for in due time it is not unlikely that the state of Wyoming will purchase the land immediately surrounding it and have it set aside as a state park. A committee from the Casper Chamber of Commerce, consisting of R. H. Nichols, A. J. Mokler and W. W. Grieve were appointed to take up the matter of the state acquiring title to the land with the 1923 session of the state legislature.

### THE DEVIL'S GATE

Devil's Gate is sixty miles from Casper, in a southwesterly direction, on the old Oregon Trail. The Oregon Trail started at Independence, Missouri, and the Devil's Gate was 843 miles from the beginning of the Trail. This wonderful cleft in the solid granite is on the Sweetwater river, and is located about twenty miles above its junction with the North Platte river. It lies in townships 28 and 29 north, ranges 87 and 88 west of the sixth principal meridian. For several miles west of Devil's Gate the river flows in an easterly direction along the southern base of a high granite ridge. At the Devil's Gate the river turns abruptly to the north and passes the ridge through a narrow chasm of very bold and striking appearance. Neither the appearance of the gorge nor any other evidence indicates that the opening was cut out by erosion. It seems rather to be a cleft in the rock formed by some convulsion of nature. The breadth of the chasm at the bottom is only about thirty feet; its depth is 330 feet, and its width at this height is about 400 feet. To the east of the gorge the ridge falls away rapidly and at two points reaches an elevation of only 100 feet above the surface of the stream in the gorge. This canyon has always been a very noted natural feature of that section of the country and has been known since 1812, when it was passed by the returning Astorians late in the fall of that year. Through the ridge just referred to lay the old Overland Trail to Oregon and California, and the proximity of the gorge to this great highway gave it unusual prominence in the history of the travel through the west. It early received the name of "Devil's Gate," which it retains to this day. The Sweetwater river, above this gorge, has a very gentle slope, only about six feet to the mile. The valley is broad.

Captain Hiram M. Chittenden with a corps of engineers spent a good portion of the summers of 1901-2 in this part of the country making an investigation for the purpose of constructing a dam in the

gorge, and in his report to the Geological survey he says that "as a single proposition for the storage of water, it is almost unequaled anywhere in the west, and the dam is no less remarkable than the gorge itself."

The walls of the gorge are of gray granite, very hard and compact. There is a black streak of granite running from the bottom to the top of the south ridge which at first sight appears to be a roadway, and it will require close inspection to be convinced that it is but a freak of nature. The elevation of the surface is practically 6,000 feet above the sea.

"This remarkable feature," says Captain Chittenden, "is one of the most notable features of its kind in the world. The traveler who takes the trouble to leave the road for a mile or so and walk out to the summit of the Devil's Gate is rewarded with a prospect such as no other point on the Trail affords. Beneath him is the tremendous chasm through the solid granite, at the bottom of which courses the gentle Sweetwater. To the westward a magnificent valley spreads out before him as far as he can see, some ten or fifteen miles wide, a paradise in the early days for buffalo and other game. Through the beautiful valley the serpentine course of the stream is plainly visible from the silver sheen of its surface or from the ribbon of foliage which grows along its banks. Below the Gate a similar valley lies spread out for many miles even to the mouth of the river. All over this region huge protuberances arise composed of detached masses of granite, the most interesting of which is Independence Rock. Lifting the eye above the surrounding plains it rests upon a cordon of mountains which completely encircles the beholder. To the northeast the Rattlesnake Hills, to the east the Casper range through which the North Platte flows; to the southeast the Seminole and Ferris ranges; to the south and southwest the Green mountains; and finally to the west, Crooks' Peak, which closes the horizon in that direction. Near this peak is a little depression through which the returning Astorians made their way from the forbidding and desert tracts south of the mountains. One has only to behold the valley of the Sweetwater to understand with what delight these way-worn travelers must have welcomed this paradise of the mountains, filled as it was, when they saw it, with grazing herds of buffalo, and water and pasturage surpassing all their possible needs.

"From the Devil's Gate the Trail continued along the Sweetwater river nearly to its source. It crossed the stream several times and there came to be two or three different routes paralleling each other for considerable distances. It will not be of profit to record minutely these unimportant variations from the general line. About thirty-six miles west of the Devil's Gate the road passed through a canyon where it crossed the stream three times in a short distance. This place was called Three Crossings. In several places the road was forced out upon the hills and back from the river, sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other. The road was usually dusty, the small streams alkaline, and only the presence of the pure Sweetwater saved this portion of the Trail from being the most trying of any."

In 1903, the Reclamation service selected the Devil's Gate as the site for the Pathfinder dam, but later abandoned the project because the present site on the North Platte river was found to be more suitable for impounding the water.

In the early days the Indians would congregate at this passageway on the Trail and when a train of emigrants appeared who were not strong enough in numbers to resist them, they would rob them of their provisions and horses, and oftentimes kill the men and children and take the women to their camp and there cause them to suffer

treatment worse than they accorded their squaws. When they tired of these "pale-faced squaws," as they were termed by the savages, they tortured and starved them until they died.

Alvin G. Cone of Waynetown, Indiana, who visited with his two daughters in Casper during the summer of 1921, passed over the Trail in June, 1863. "We camped at Devil's Gate," says Mr. Cone, "and four of us started to climb the north wall, and when about half way up there was a loud roaring coming out of a large hole between two huge boulders, which we took to be the roar of a lion. We were not long in getting down, and as we reached the base we noticed a grave with a wooden slab at the head, with this inscription:

" 'Here lie the bones of Caroline Todd,  
Whose soul has lately gone to God;  
'Ere redemption was too late,  
She was redeemed at Devil's Gate.'

"The girl at the time of her death was eighteen years of age. She, with four women, had climbed to the top of the ridge, and the girl told her companions that she was going to look over. They warned her not to try it, for she would fall if she did, but she went to the edge of the chasm, became dizzy and fell to the bottom. A company of soldiers was stationed near there at the time, and they cared for the grave as long as they remained."

The Sweetwater valley is one of the most picturesque spots in Natrona county. Coming into this valley from the southwest, through Whiskey Gap a wonderful panorama meets your eye. To the west are the Wind River mountains, mottled with snow; to the east is Devil's Gate, a rift in the mammoth rock, where the river countless ages ago burst through its barriers and sought freedom in the swelling plains that sweep unevenly to the east; to the southwest the Green mountains and to the north the Rattlesnake range. The Sweetwater river, like a great winding serpent, threads its way through the valley among the sagebrush and meadow lands. There are traditions as to how the Sweetwater was named, one of them being to the effect that a party of trappers were traveling along the stream, having with them a pack-mule loaded with sugar. While crossing the stream, the animal slipped and fell and the sugar dissolved into the water, hence the name Sweetwater. Another is that in the spring of 1823 William H. Ashley of Saint Louis, who had entered into the fur trading business, came to the Rocky mountain region by the Platte river route. Coming up the stream a few miles west from where the Pathfinder dam is now located, he camped on the Sweetwater. This stream had not yet been named, but on account of the water being superior for drinking purposes, and the trappers claiming that it left a pleasant





SWEETWATER VALLEY. *Inset:* CLOSE VIEW OF THE DEVIL'S GATE



THE DEVIL'S GATE AND THE TOM SUN RANCH



SECOND STREET, CASPER, LOOKING EAST FROM CENTER, 1920



taste in their mouths, General Ashley accordingly named it Sweet-water. In either case the stream is appropriately named, for the water in this river carries no alkaline, which is prevalent in the streams in that part of the country.

A large company of Mormons who, in 1856, started from Saint Joseph, Missouri, to Salt Lake City, Utah, suffered hardships, misery, and death because they were unprepared to make the long journey. When they started for the "promised land," they had but a small supply of provisions and were scantily clothed. Some of those who had horses or oxen reached their destination with no more than the average hardships and number of deaths, but there were over 600 poor, misguided souls who started on the fifteen-hundred-mile journey with hand-carts. The men, women, and children, with all they possessed in the world loaded in these hand-carts, would pull and push their carts up the hills and through the valleys, across the streams and over the sometimes hot sands and sometimes muddy gumbo roads, making a distance oftentimes of not more than five miles a day and never more than twelve miles.

They did not start to cross the plains until late in the summer, and the severe storms of winter overtook them about the time they reached the North Platte river in Central Wyoming. These poor sufferers were strung along the route in groups for a distance of about 100 miles.

Word reached Salt Lake City apprising Brigham Young of the condition of his people late in October, and at a conference, Mr. Young announced that "there are a number of people on the plains who have started to come to us in hand-carts; they will need help, and I want twenty teams to be ready in the morning, with two men to each team, to go out and meet them."

The twenty teams, with wagons loaded with provisions, started out from Salt Lake the next morning and among the men with the teams was Daniel W. Jones, the author of "Forty Years Among the Indians." His description of the terrible suffering and death, mingled with the heroism and folly of the people, is worthy of production in these pages, for the people in this age can hardly imagine that such misery could exist. He says:

"The weather soon became cold and stormy. We traveled hard, never taking time to stop for dinner. There was some expectation of meeting the first train on or about Green river. We began to feel great anxiety about the emigrants, as the weather was now cold and stormy, and we, strong men with good outfits, found the nights severe. What must be the condition of those we were to meet. Many old men and women, little children, mothers with nursing babes, crossing the plains, pulling hand-carts. Our hearts began to ache when we reached Green river and yet no word of them. Here an express was sent on ahead with a light wagon to meet and cheer the people up.

"At the South Pass we encountered a severe snow-storm. After crossing the divide we turned down into a sheltered place on the Sweetwater. While in camp and during the snowstorm two men were seen on horseback going west. They were hailed. On reaching us they proved to be Brothers Willie and J. B. Elder. They reported their company in a starving condition at their camp, then east of Rocky Ridge, and said our express had gone on to meet the other companies still in the rear. We started immediately through the storm to reach their camp. On arriving we found them in a condition that would stir the feelings of the hardest heart. They were in a poor place, the storm having caught them where fuel was scarce. They were out of provisions and really freezing and starving to death. The morning after our arrival nine were buried in one grave. We did all we could to relieve them. The boys struck out on horseback and dragged up a lot of wood, provisions were distributed and all went to work to cheer the sufferers. Soon there was an improvement in camp, but many poor, faithful people had gone too far—had passed beyond the power to recruit. Our help came too late for some, and many died after our arrival.

"William Kimball with a few men and wagons turned back, taking the oversight of this company to help them in. Captain Grant left a wagonload of flour near the Pass with Redick Allred to guard it. There were several hundred people with Brother Willie. They had a few teams, but most of them had become too weak to be of much service. When we left Salt Lake it was understood that other teams would follow until all the help needed would be on the road.

"The greater portion of our company continued on towards Devil's Gate, traveling through snow all the way. When we arrived at Devil's Gate we found our express there awaiting us. No tidings as yet were received of the other companies. Having seen the sufferings of Brother Willie's company, we more fully realized the danger the others were in. The elders who had just returned from England having many dear friends with these companies, suffered great anxiety, some of them feeling more or less the responsibility resting upon them for allowing these people to start in such a condition across the plains. At first we were at a loss what to do, for we did not expect to have to go farther than Devil's Gate. We decided to make camp and send on an express to find where the people were. The first night after leaving Devil's Gate, our horses followed a band of buffalo several miles; it was near noon the next day when we found them. We determined to get even with them, so rode at full gallop wherever the road would permit. After riding about twelve miles we saw a white man's shoe track in the road. Brother Young called out, 'Here they are.' We put our animals to their utmost speed and soon came in sight of the camp at Red Bluff.<sup>1</sup> This was Brother Edward Martin's hand-cart company and Ben Horgett's wagon company. There was still another wagon company down near the Platte crossing.

"This company was in almost as bad a condition as the first one. They had nearly given up hope. They were about exhausted, and many of them worn out and sick. When we rode in, there was a general rush to shake hands. Many declared we were angels from heaven. I told them I thought we were better than angels for this occasion, as we were good, strong men, come to help them into the valley, and that our company, and wagons loaded with provisions, were not far away. I thought this the best consolation under the circumstances. The people were told to gather up and move on at once, as the only salvation was to travel a little every day. This was right, and no doubt saved many lives for we, among so many (some 1,200), could do but little, and there was danger before help could arrive unless the people made some headway toward the valley.

"After talking to and encouraging the people, they agreed to start the next morning. We then started at full gallop for John Hunt's camp, fifteen miles farther. On arriving no one noticed us or appeared to care who we were. Their tents were pitched in good shape, wood was plentiful, and no one seemed concerned. Joseph A. Young became offended, not expecting such a cool reception, and remarked, 'Well, it appears we are not needed here.' So we went down into the bottom and made camp for ourselves. After a while some one sauntered down our way, thinking probably we were mountaineers. These recognized Brother Young and made a rush for the camp, giving the word: soon we were literally carried in and a special tent was pitched for our use. Everything was

<sup>1</sup> This Red Bluff is about a mile on The Trail west from Alcova.

done to make amends for the previous neglect. About the time we were settled in our camp, Captain Hunt and Gilbert Van Schoonhoven, his assistant, arrived from the Platte bridge, also Captain Ben Horgett. They were rejoiced to meet us. These people were just on the eve of suffering, but as yet had not. Quite a number of their cattle had died during the snowstorm, which had now been on them for nine days.

"Next morning Brother Young and others went to Platte bridge, leaving Brother Garr and I to get the company started according to agreement made the evening before. There was a spirit of apathy among the people, and instead of going for their teams at once, several began to quarrel about who should go. This made us feel like leaving them to take care of themselves. We saddled up to do so. The clouds were gathering thickly for a storm, and just as we were about to start it commenced snowing very hard. The heavens were obscured by clouds, excepting a small place about the shape of the gable end of a house. This opening was in the direction of the valley and the sun seemed to shine through with great brightness. We mounted our mules; Brother Garr, pointing to the bright spot in the heavens, said: 'Do you see that hole? You had better get out of here before that closes up, for it is your opening to the valley. We are going.' The people, I believe, took this for a warning and soon started for their cattle.

"Next morning they moved on. Brother Garr and I went back to where E. Martin's camp had been. They had rolled out, and Captain Horgett's wagon company were just starting. We continued on, overtaking the hand-cart company ascending a long muddy hill. A condition of distress here met my eyes that I never saw before or since. The train was strung out for three or four miles. There were old men pulling and tugging their carts, sometimes loaded with a sick wife or children, women pulling along sick husbands; little children six to eight years old struggling through the mud and snow. As night came on the mud would freeze on their clothes and feet. There were two of us and hundreds needing help. What could we do? We gathered on to some of the most helpless with our rias tied to the carts, and helped as many as we could into camp on Avenue hill. This was a bitter, cold night and we had no fuel except very small sagebrush. Several died that night. Next morning, Brother Young having come up, we three started for our camp near Devil's Gate. When we arrived all were rejoiced to get the news that we had found the emigrants. The following morning most of the company moved down, meeting the hand-cart company at Greasewood creek. Such assistance as we could give was rendered to all until they finally arrived at Devil's Gate fort, about the first of November. There were some 1,200 in all, about one-half with hand-carts and the other half with teams.

"The winter storms had now set in in all their severity. The provisions we took amounted to almost nothing among so many people, many of them now on very short rations, some almost starving. Many were dying daily from exposure and want of food. We were at a loss to know why others had not come on to our assistance.

"The company was composed of average emigrants; old, middle-aged and young women and children. The men seemed to be failing and dying faster than the women and children. The hand-cart company was moved over to a cove in the mountains for shelter and fuel; a distance of two miles from the fort.<sup>1</sup> The wagons were banked near the fort. It became impossible to travel farther without reconstruction or help. We did all we possibly could to help and cheer the people. All the people who could, crowded into the houses of the fort out of the cold and storm. One crowd cut away the walls of the house they were in for fuel, until half of the roof fell in; fortunately, they were all on the protected side and no one hurt.

"Many suggestions were offered as to what should be done, some efforts being made to cache the imperishable goods and go on with the rest. Accordingly pits were dug, boxes opened and the hardware, etc., put in one, while clothing, etc., were put in another. Often these boxes belonged to different persons. An attempt was made to keep an account of these changes. This caching soon proved to be a failure, for the pits would fill up with drifting snow as fast as the dirt was thrown out, so no caches were made. The goods were never replaced.

<sup>1</sup> At this camp more than 100 people died in the nine days they were camped there, and were buried in a trench. Some say that they died of cholera, but the cause of their death was exposure and the lack of clothing to keep them warm, and insufficient nourishment.



"Each evening the elders would meet in council. I remember hearing Charles Decker remark that he had crossed the plains over fifty times, carrying the mail, and this was the darkest hour he had ever seen. Cattle and horses were dying every day. What to do was all that could be talked about. Five or six days passed and nothing was determined upon. It was near the time appointed for the meeting. As soon as we were together, Captain Grant asked if anyone had thought of a plan. It was suggested that the goods be left with some one to care for them, and the rest should move on. Captain Grant replied that there were no provisions to leave, and it would be asking too much of anyone to stay and starve for the sake of the goods and besides, who would stay if called upon. I answered, 'Any of us would.'

"These goods were the luggage of a season's emigration that these two wagon trains had contracted to freight, and it was being taken through as well as the luggage of the people present. Leaving these goods meant to abandon all that many poor families had upon earth. So it was different from common merchandise. The next morning store rooms in the fort were cleared and about 200 wagons run in and unloaded. No one was allowed to keep out anything but a change of clothing, some bedding and light cooking utensils. This unloading occupied three days. The hand-cart people were notified to abandon most of their carts. Teams were hitched up and the sick and feeble loaded in with such light weight as was allowed. All became common property. When everything was ready Brother Burton said to me, 'Now, Brother Jones, we want you to pick two men from the valley to stay with you. We have notified Captains Hunt and Horgett to detail seventeen men from their companies to stay with you. We will move on in the morning. Get your company together and such provisions as you can find in the hands of those who may have anything to spare. You know ours is about out. Will you do it?' I said, 'Yes.'

"There was not enough money on earth to have hired me to stay. I had left home for only a few days and was not prepared to remain so long away; but I remembered my assertion that any of us would stay if called upon. I could not back out, so I selected Thomas Alexander and Ben Hampton. That night we were all called together and organized as a branch. Dan W. Jones, Thomas Alexander and Ben Hampton were chosen to preside, with J. Laty as clerk. Captain Grant asked about our provisions. I told him they were scant, but as many were suffering and some dying, all we asked was an equal chance with the rest. He told us there would be a lot of worn out cattle left; to gather them up and try to save them. They consisted mostly of yearlings and two-year-old heifers, some were taken through.

"The storm had now ceased to rage, and great hopes were felt for a successful move. We were daily expecting more help and often wondered why it did not come. Next day all hands pulled out, most of them on foot.

"After getting my camp regulated a little and giving some instructions, I got on my horse and rode on to see how the train was moving along. All were out of sight when I started. After traveling a few miles, I came up to a lady sitting alone on the side of the road, weeping bitterly. I noticed she was elegantly dressed and appeared strong and well. I asked her what was the matter. She sobbingly replied, 'This is too much for me. I have always had plenty, and have never known hardships; we had a good team and wagon; my husband, if let alone, could have taken me on in comfort. Now I am turned out to walk in this wind and snow. I am determined not to go on, but will stay here and die. My husband has gone and left me, but I will not go another step.' The train was two or three miles ahead and moving on. I persuaded her after a while to go on with me.

"On calling the company together at the fort that night, I told them in plain words that if there was a man in camp who could not help eat the last poor animal left with us, hides and all, suffer all manner of privations, almost starve to death, that he could go on the next day and overtake the trains. No one wanted to go. All voted to take their chances. On taking stock of provisions, we found about twenty days' rations. No salt or bread excepting a few crackers. There was at least five months of winter before us and nothing much to eat but a few perishing cattle and what game we might chance to kill. The game was not very certain, as the severe storms had driven away everything. The first move was to fix up the fort.



"I followed the train this day to their second encampment and the next day traveled with them. There was much suffering, deaths occurring often. Eph Hanks arrived in camp from the valley and brought word that some of the teams that had reached South Pass and should have met us here, had turned back toward home and tried to persuade Redick Allred, who was left there with a load of flour, to go back with them. The men who did this might have felt justified, for they said it was no use going farther; that we had doubtless all perished. If this had not occurred it was the intention of Captain Grant to have sent some one down to us with a load of flour. As it was, by the time any was received, the people were in a starving condition, and could not spare it. From the third camp, where I saw the last of the brethren, an express was sent on to catch the returning supplies and continue on to the valley, giving word that the train was coming. After great suffering and much assistance the emigrants were finally landed in the valley. I left the company, feeling a little downcast, to return to Devil's Gate. It was pretty well understood that there would be no relief sent us. My hopes were that we could kill game. We had accepted the situation, and as far as Captain Grant was concerned he had done as much as he could for us. There was more risk for those who went on than for us remaining.

"On returning to camp, I found that the cattle left were very poor. The weather had moderated and we hoped to get on good feed and recruit them a little. Over 200 head of cattle had died in the vicinity of the fort. Along the road each way for a day's travel were carcasses. This drove loads of prairie wolves into our camp, and it was almost impossible to keep them off from the cattle in the day time. We were obliged to corral them at night. Once in the day time a small bunch were taken and run off in spite of the efforts of the herders to stop them. In fact, it became dangerous to face these wolves, they were at times almost ready to attack men.

"We soon found it would be impossible to save the cattle. Some twenty-five had died or been killed by the wolves within a week. It was decided to kill the rest, about fifty head. A few were in living order, but many would have died within twenty-four hours. In fact we killed them to keep them from dying. We had a first class butcher from London, who dressed everything in the best style. Everything was saved that we thought might be eaten. We hung the meat up. The poorest of it we did not expect to eat, but intended to use it for wolf bait further along when the carcasses were all devoured, provided we could get traps from the Platte bridge, which we afterwards did. We never used our poor beef for wolf bait, as we had to eat the whole of it ourselves, and finally the hides were all consumed for food. After killing the cattle we had nothing much to do but fix up the fort and look after four ponies we had left. There were plenty of guns and ammunition left with us, also dishes and cooking utensils. After thoroughly repairing the houses, chinking and daubing them, we overhauled the goods stored away. While storing the bales and boxes the snow had drifted in among them. There was nothing but dirt floors and the goods had been tumbled in without any regard for order. Having cleaned out everything, we took ox yokes, of which there were a great many, and made floors of them and then piled the goods on them. While handling the goods we found some coffee, sugar and fruit, also a roll of leather. These we kept out and put in our store room for use. We also found a box of soap and candles. We were told by Captain Grant to use anything we could find to make us comfortable.

"During the time we were at a loss what to do, the men's minds did not run much upon property, the main interest was to save life. One prominent elder became very liberal. He had several large trunks, making presents to several of the boys from the valley of socks, shirts and such things as would help to make them comfortable. He left his trunks in my rooms, giving me the keys and telling me to use anything there was, not to suffer for anything that could be found, and asked God to bless me. I told the boys who remained with me that we had better not open this man's trunks, that when he got to the valley and had time to think, he would change his mind and would doubtless be thinking we were using his goods, and if we touched anything belonging to him we would be accused of taking more than we had. Later occurrences proved this to be a good suggestion.

"With the cattle killed that were fit to eat, and what provisions we had on hand, we managed to live for a while without suffering, except for salt. Bread soon gave out

and we lived on meat alone. Some of us went out hunting daily but with poor success. A day or two before Christmas, Ephraim Hanks and Feramor Little arrived at the fort, bringing the mail from the valley with the following letter of instructions from President Brigham Young:

"Dec. 7th, 1856.

"Brothers Jones, Alexander and Hampton, in charge at Devil's Gate, and the rest of the brethren at that place:

"Dear Brethren:

"Being somewhat aware of a natural disposition in many to relax their vigilance after a temporary and unaccustomed watchfulness, more especially in case no particular cause of alarm is of frequent occurrence, I feel impressed to write a few suggestions and words of counsel to you all. You are in an Indian country, few in number, blockaded by the snows, and far from assistance at this season of the year. Under such circumstances you can but realize the necessity of all you being constantly on the alert, to be firm, steady, sober-minded and sober-bodied, united, faithful and watchful, living your religion. Do not go from your fort in small parties of one, two or three at a time. But when game is to be sought, wood got up, or any other operation to be performed requiring you to travel from under the protection of the fort guns, go in bands of some ten or twelve together, and let them be well armed; and let those who stay by the stuff be watchful while their comrades are out. And at all times and under all circumstances let every person have his arms and ammunitions ready for active service at a moment's warning, so you cannot be surprised by your foes nor in any way be taken advantage of, whether in or out of the fort. Always have plenty of water about the buildings, and be very careful about fires, and the preservation from damp, fire or other damage of the goods in your care. Unless buffalo or other game come within a reasonable distance, you had better kill some of the cattle than run much risk in quest of game. Use all due diligence for the preservation of your stock, and try to so ration out your flour as to have it last until we can send you relief, which, as before stated, will be forwarded as early as possible in the spring, but may not reach you until May, depending somewhat on the winter snows and spring weather, of which you will be able to form an estimate as the season advances.

"We will send teams to your relief as early as possible in the spring, and trust to learn that all has been well with you and the property in your care. Brothers Little and Hanks will furnish you with items of news from the valley and I will forward you some packages of our papers by them.

"Praying you may be united, faithful and protected,

I remain, Your brother in the gospel,

"BRIGHAM YOUNG."

"From this letter it is plain to see that Brother Brigham was not apprised of our condition.

"Soon after, the Magraw mail company came along under the charge of Jesse Jones. They left their coaches, fitted up with packs and started for the valley.

"They went down sixty miles to Platte bridge to winter. There were no provisions to be had at the Bridge, for three of us had been down to see if we could get supplies. We barely got enough to last us back. The mountaineers there had some cattle but no bread, they lived by hunting.

"Game soon became so scarce that we could kill nothing. We ate all the poor meat; one could get hungry eating it. Finally that was all gone, nothing now but hides were left. We made a trial of them. A lot was cooked and eaten without any seasoning, and it made the whole company sick. Many were so turned against the stuff that it made them sick to think of it. We had coffee and some sugar, but drinking coffee seemed to only destroy the appetite, and stimulate for only a little while. One man became delirious from drinking so much of it. Things looked dark, for nothing remained but the poor raw hides taken from starved cattle. We asked the Lord to direct us what to do. The brethren did not murmur, but felt to trust in God. We had cooked the hide, after soaking and scraping the hair off until it was soft and then ate it, glue and all. This made it rather inclined to stay with us longer than we desired. Finally I was impressed how to fix the stuff, and gave the company advice, telling them how to cook it; for them to scorch and scrape the hair off; this had a tendency to kill and purify

the bad taste that scalding gave it. After scraping, boil one hour in plenty of water, throwing the water away which had extracted all the glue, then wash and scrape the hide thoroughly, washing in cold water, than boil to a jelly and let it get cold, and then eat with a little sugar sprinkled on it. This was considerable trouble, but we had little else to do and it was better than starving.

"We asked the Lord to bless our stomachs and adapt them to this food. We hadn't the faith to ask Him to bless the raw-hide, for it was hard stock. On eating now all seemed to relish the feast. We were three days without eating before this second attempt was made. We enjoyed this sumptuous fare for about six weeks, and never had the gout.

"In February the first Indian came to our camp. He was of the Snake tribe, his people were located a day's travel up the river. At the time of his arrival we were out of everything, having not only eaten the hides taken from cattle killed, but had eaten the wrappings from the wagon-tongues, old moccasin-soles were eaten also, and a piece of buffalo hide that had been used for a foot mat for two months. The day the Indian came was fast-day, and for us fast-day in very truth. We met as usual, for we kept our monthly fast-day. During the meeting we became impressed that there were some wrongs existing among the brethren in camp that should be corrected, and that if we would make a general cleaning up, and present our case before the Lord, He would take care of us, for we were on His business. On questioning some of the company privately, we found that several had goods in their possession not belonging to them. When we felt satisfied all goods were replaced we went *en masse* and cut a hole in the ice on the river. There were several carcasses of cattle that had died lying near the fort, that the wolves had not devoured. Some of the boys, contrary to counsel, had cut steaks from them during the time we were eating the hides; it made them quite sick. There was a pile of offal in the butcher shop from the poor cattle killed. But what looked more tempting than all to starving men was a pile of more than one hundred fat wolf carcasses, skinned, piled up and frozen near the fort. They looked very much like nice fat mutton. Many of the company asked my opinion about eating them. I told them if they would all do as I advised we would have a good clean supper of healthy food; that these carcasses were unclean; that we were on the Lord's service, and did not believe He wanted us to suffer so much, if we only had faith to trust Him and ask for better. We all became united in this feeling. Accordingly we hauled all these carcasses of cattle, the wolves, also the offal from the store-house and shoved them into the hole cut in the ice, where they floated off out of our reach. We then went and washed out our store-house and presented it before the Lord empty, but clean.

"Near sundown the Indian spoken of came to our quarters. Some of the boys hunted up a small piece of raw-hide and gave it to him. He said he had eaten it before. None of us were able to talk much with him; we invited him to remain with us over night. Evening came on and no supper; eight o'clock, no word from anyone. And the word had positively been given that we should have supper. Between eight and nine o'clock all were sitting waiting, now and then good-naturedly saying it was most supper time. No one seemed disheartened. All at once we heard a strange noise resembling human voices down the road. The voices were loud and in an unknown tongue. Several of us, taking our arms, started in the direction of the noise. On getting nearer we recognized the voices. The Magraw party was making another effort to get through with their coaches; they had got stuck in a snow drift and the noise we heard was Canadian Frenchmen swearing at their mules. We helped them out and guided them into the fort. It was a bitter cold night, but we had good houses with rousing fires. They gave to our cook all of their provisions. About ten o'clock twenty-six hungry men sat down to about as thankfully received a supper as was ever partaken of by mortal man.

"In January when this party passed through to Platte bridge, I sent word by them to the mountaineers there that we would pay a good price for meat brought to us. Two of their best hunters made the attempt to get us meat, but failed, almost starving themselves on the hunt. They never reached our fort, but returned to their homes on the Platte.

"After supper we found there was scarcely enough left for breakfast. One of the mail company, a Frenchman, commenced talking with the Indian, explaining our

situation to him. He said their camp was also out of meat; that they were hungry, and that he was out prospecting for game, as there was none in the neighborhood of their camp, but he thought he could find game the next day if some one would go with him toward the Crow Indians, who were supposed to be in the direction of the game. This seemed the only show, so Jesse Jones decided to lay over and send out his hunter with some pack animals; also ten of our company, the stoutest and most willing. They, no doubt, would have fought the whole Crow nation to have protected our Indian friend.

"Late that evening the Frenchmen and Indian came into the fort with their animals loaded with good buffalo meat. They were all delighted with the Indian, telling how he killed the buffalo with his arrows, the Frenchmen shooting first and wounding the animal and the Indian doing the rest.

"These Indians of the plains killed a great many buffalo with arrows. They would stick two arrows into a buffalo's heart, crossing their direction so that as the buffalo ran these arrows would work and cut his heart almost in two. This would soon bring the poor brute down; whereas with a single arrow in the heart they would run a long distance.

"The mail company again fitted up with packs, leaving their coaches, this time making the trip successfully. They left all the meat they could spare, taking only scant rations with them.

"The Indian went away, saying he would tell his people about us, and if they found any meat they would divide. It did not take long for twenty hungry men to eat all our supplies. About the 4th of March the last morsel had been eaten for breakfast. We went hunting daily, sometimes killing a little small game, but nothing of account. Our provisions were exhausted and we had cleaned up everything before Jesse Jones came to our relief. We were now in a tight place. There was a set of harness and a pack saddle covered with rawhide still on hand, that some of the boys considered safe to depend upon for a few days, still we had great hopes of getting something better. Our faith had been much strengthened by receiving the supplies mentioned.

"As usual, we went out to see what we could find in the way of game. After traveling through the snow for several miles at the foot of the mountains, we saw a drove of mountain sheep. They were standing, seemingly entirely off their guard. I was in front and saw the sheep, as I supposed, before they saw me. We dodged down out of sight. I crept to a large rock, fully expecting to get meat. When I looked to get a shot, the game was gone; I could see it making for the top of the mountain. We watched them for a minute or two and they were soon too far for us to follow. My heart almost failed me, and I could have cried like a child, for I knew that nothing was in camp when we left, and our comrades expected us to bring something for supper. We were convinced that nothing could be obtained this day by hunting, so we started for home. After traveling a few miles we struck the road below Devil's Gate, and here we stopped to hold a council. As will be remembered, our instructions from Brother Brigham were never to leave the fort with less than ten men. There never had been a time when we had that many men able to stand very hard service. Sometimes I felt like disregarding counsel and going out to try to get food, or perish in the attempt. But up to this time we had all followed instructions as nearly as possible. Now here was a trial for me. I firmly believed I could go on foot to Platte bridge and get something to save the lives of my comrades. Very few of the others were able, but all were willing to go with me. I told them if counsel had to be broken I would risk no one but myself, and would go alone. The boys thought they could live five days before starving. So it was arranged that I should start alone next morning for the Platte bridge. I had now been one day without food, and it would take two more to reach the bridge, as the snow was from eighteen inches to three feet deep. This looked a little hard, but I fully made up my mind to try it.

"On arriving in sight of camp we saw a number of horses; we knew some one had arrived, but had no idea who it was. A shout of joy rang out from our crowd that made the hills ring. The new arrivals proved to be the first company of the Y. X. Express. This was the first effort of this firm to send the mail through. Several acquaintances were along, and of course we were rejoiced to see them, especially so when we learned they had a good supper for us. A day or two before their arrival they had killed a large buffalo, and they packed the whole of it into our camp. I remember



about the first thing I did after shaking hands, was to drink a pint of strong salty broth, where some salt pork had been boiled.

"When the company arrived, some of our boys were getting the pack saddle soaked up, ready for cooking the hide covering. As it was, the saddle was allowed to dry up again and it may be in existence yet and doing well as far as I know.

"Ben Hampton and myself started to go to Platte bridge with this party, intending to get some supplies if possible. We had gone but a few miles when we met some men from the Platte bringing us some beef. They had heard in some way that we were still alive. I think the Indians must have sent the word. They could not get buffalo meat, so had killed some cattle and were bringing them to us. They had been four days on the road, tramping snow and working through drifts, expecting to find us starving. I often think of these old pioneers, who were always so ready to help a fellow man in need. We returned to the fort with the meat. We paid for it in goods from Brother Van Cott's boxes, paying mostly calico and domestic. They charged us ten cents a pound, which was very cheap considering.

"While Jesse Jones was in camp, one of his men gave me a small book of words in the Snake language. I expected the Indians would come around and studied hard every day. Soon they commenced coming in to see us. There were over 100 lodges of Snakes and Bannocks who came in from the Wind River country and camped about fifteen miles from us. Small bands camped around us in different directions. They soon learned we were short of provisions. The first party that brought meat to us wanted to charge an unreasonable price for it. I talked with them quite a while before they would consent to sell it cheaper. They said that they themselves were hungry, showing us their bare arms, how lean they were. But I told them it was not just to take advantage of our circumstances. I weighed up a dollar's worth of meat on a pair of spring balances, marked the scales plainly and told them I would give them no more. They consented, and we bought hundreds of pounds afterwards without more trouble. In buying we had to weigh one dollar's worth at a time, no matter how much they sold us. We exchanged various articles with them, many of the company trading shirts, handkerchiefs and such things as they could spare. We had some coffee, for which the Indians traded readily. This helped us out for a short season, but game became so scarce that this camp of natives had to move out or starve. They came up the first day and pitched their lodges near us. We had but little provisions on hand, some meat and a few pounds of flour that we used to thicken our broth, was all. We had about lost our appetite for bread. We were a little uneasy to have all these hungry Indians come upon us at once; the greatest care had to be taken to avoid trouble. They were not of the best class, being a party made up of Snakes and Bannocks, who had left their regular tribes and chiefs and joined together under an ambitious young fellow named Tabawantooa. Washakie, the old Snake chief, called them bad men. There was one little party under an old petty chief, Toquatah, who kept apart from the main band. From them we had procured most of our meat. Toquatah had informed us that the main band and his were not on the best of terms, and that Tabawantooa was no good. This naturally made us feel a little uneasy. We had some 200 wagon loads of valuable goods under our charge, and only twenty men, the greater portion of them with no frontier experience.

"By this time I could talk considerable Snake, and many of these Indians understood Ute. Tabawantooa and his band came in sight of our quarters about noon. They were all mounted and well armed. The chief with many others rode up in quite a pompous style, no doubt expecting to be looked upon with awe and treated with great deference. I had time to get my wits together before they got to the gate where an armed guard was stationed. Knowing that from such as we had we would have to make a great showing of hospitality we concluded to make up in ceremony what was lacking in food. So all the camp-kettles and coffee-pots were filled and put on. The one for weak soup, the other for strong coffee. We had plenty of the latter on hand.

"The company was instructed to go into their rooms, shut the doors, keep quiet, and not to show themselves unless ordered to do so. I was to meet the Indians outside and invite them in the gate, as we knew the chief and grandees of the band would expect to be entertained. Soon the chief with some fifty others rode up to the fort, while hundreds more passed on a short distance and commenced to put up their lodges. I

met the chief, shook hands, and asked him to get down and come in. He wanted to know if they could ride inside. I told him no, and explained to him that we had a lot of men in the fort who were afraid of Indians; and that they had gone into their houses and shut the doors; but the door of my house was open for them, but that these men, who were afraid, should not be frightened; they must leave their horses and arms outside the fort. This the chief agreed to do and appointed a man to see that no one came in with arms. Soon my room was full. I explained to the chief that we had little to eat and could not entertain many; but half we had they were welcome to. I talked and acted as if we were glad to see them, still I, with all my friendship for Indians, would have been willing for this band to have taken another road. The weak soup and strong coffee were soon ready; cups were filled and the feast commenced. The chief sent word for those outside to go on to camp, probably seeing his rations would be short if many more came in. Indians, when hungry, relish anything that tightens their belts, so our friends filled and emptied their cups many times. Soon those that had remained were satisfied, bade us good-by, mounted their horses and started to their camp, the chief inviting us to go and take supper with them. We went up late in the day. Some coffee had been given the chief and at supper we feasted on poor antelope meat and coffee. We were told that but one antelope had been killed that day and that the chief had been presented with it.

"The whole camp were about out of food except thistle roots. These were not very plentiful, as we had already dug and eaten the most that could be found for miles around our quarters. These natives moved on the next morning, Toquatah's band being still in the rear. In a day or two the last band came along and camped near us. We were glad to see them and wanted them to remain near us, but they were afraid of the Crow Indians and desired to keep in the vicinity of the larger band for protection against their common enemy. We explained to them our destitute condition, telling them that we were again about out of provisions, and would be sorry to have them leave, for while they were near they had never let us suffer for meat. Next morning the old chief said he would go out twelve miles to a gap in the mountains and camp, and if he could find any game he would let us have some dried meat he had reserved. We waited a day and then went to see if our friends were prospered. Nothing had been found. Ten of us stayed all night with the Indians and we barely got enough for supper and breakfast. The chief told us to go back home; he would move on a little farther; if he found anything he would send it to us. His spirit towards us was something like a mother's with a lot of hungry children.

"We went home feeling a little sad. We had our animals, but did not wish to kill them; still we felt safe as long as mule flesh was on hand. To our joy, next day some Indians came from their camp, bringing us three hundred pounds of buffalo meat; and informing us that they had seen signs of game; and if we would come to them the next morning, they might let us have some more. The weather was still cold, but the snow was mostly gone from the lowlands, it being now near the first of April. When we arrived at their camp the Indians were just starting out to move a few miles farther towards where the signs of buffalo had been seen. We had taken a few things with us to trade for the meat. We camped in the afternoon some thirty miles from home. The old chief called out and soon the squaws commenced bringing in a few pounds each of good dried meat. We traded for about 300 pounds — all our mules could pack and about all the Indians could spare. This, of course, was all we could expect, but the old chief said maybe they could do more for us in the morning. Next morning after breakfast, we saddled up, packing our dried meat on the mule. As we were about ready to start there was quite a commotion in camp. We thought at first the Crow Indians were upon us, but the old chief, looking in an easterly direction said, 'It is some of the young men driving the buffalo. Now good-by. You go back on your road and you will find some more meat ready for you soon.' We started and had gone but a short distance, probably three miles, when we found the buffalo that was being chased had been run into our trail, killed and made ready to deliver to us. We gave some few things we had left and they loaded both of our saddle animals. This left us nearly thirty miles to go afoot. We did not mind this on the start, but did before we got home. I had been wearing moccasins all winter, had done a great deal of walking and had felt well and strong; but the winter had begun to break and there was mud and wet snow to en-



counter on our trip. Some one had induced me to put on a heavy pair of stiff-soled English shoes. About sundown I gave out; got so lame that it was impossible for me to wear the shoes and travel. We had about ten miles to go yet, and no trail, as the Indian trail was much longer than to cross directly over the country, and we wished to take the shortest cut. Moreover there was still a few inches of snow on the ground part of the way on the most direct route. I was compelled to pull off my shoes and go in my stocking feet. About midnight we got in, my feet a little the worse for wear; but so happy were we with our success that my feet soon got well. About this time the second company of the Y. X. Express passed down. They had but little to spare us, but we were now out of danger. We got a little flour, and bacon and salt. The word was that the next company would bring us flour. The most of us had got so that we cared but little for bread if we could have plenty of meat. Another Y. X. company soon arrived, going east. They gave us a little flour and other provisions; they also brought us letters telling us when the relief train would arrive.

"Making a close estimate of the food we now had, we found it would last us till the promised provisions could arrive, which would be about the first of May. There were twenty of us now. We quit rationing and ate all we wanted. Now the food soon began to diminish very fast. At this time we could go to the Platte bridge and get provisions, but on calling the company together all hands agreed to make the meat last by again rationing. We could do this quite easily, allowing one and a half pounds per day. We lived a few days on these rations and all seemed content until one day I was informed that there was a great dissatisfaction being manifested by some of the company about the rations. I immediately called the company together to see what was the trouble. Several expressed themselves quite freely, finding fault for being rationed when provisions could be had and saying that they thought I ought to go and get something to eat and not have them suffer any more. We had suffered everything that men could suffer and live. We had often been on the point of starvation. Sometimes becoming so weak that we could scarcely get our firewood, having to go some distance to the mountain for it. We were now all in good health and had, as I understood, willingly agreed to be rationed for a few days, until relief came from Salt Lake City. I did not care so much for the trouble of going for provisions, but I felt a great deal of pride in the spirit of the company and this was a sore disappointment for me, for no one had a just reason to find fault. I said, 'Well, I will go and get you all you want. Now pitch in and eat your fill. I will have more by the time you eat what is on hand.'

"That same evening twenty men arrived at our camp, bringing nearly a ton of flour and other provisions. This company had been sent to strengthen our post. They informed us that there was a large company of apostates on the road. Before leaving Salt Lake some of this company had made threats that indicated danger to us. The circumstances leading to the threats were these: The goods we were guarding belonged to the last season's emigrants. The wagon companies freighting them through agreed to deliver them in Salt Lake City. These goods were to be taken in and delivered as by contract. Some of the owners had become dissatisfied with Mormonism and were going back to the states. As their goods had not arrived in Salt Lake City, they demanded that they should be delivered at Devil's Gate. Quite a number settled their freight bills and brought orders for their goods and received them all right. Others refused to settle, but threatened that if the goods were not given up they would take them by force. The company was composed largely of this class and their backers. They numbered about fifty men. The twenty men coming to our relief were sent under the emergency. We now had forty men, well armed, the twenty sent being picked for the occasion. Our old company were reliable. I now got my company ready for fight if necessary. We had prepared port holes in front of the fort and here I stationed some of the best shots. Soon we saw the men approaching. I did not wish bloodshed, and fully believed that they were making a bluff, so concluded to try and beat them at their own game. I instructed some of the best marksmen what to do in case shooting had to be done. As the men approached, I went out alone and stood about thirty yards from the fort, having only my pistol, and told them to halt. They halted but commenced to threaten and abuse the whole fraternity, sparing none. I explained our situation, being simply custodian of the goods, not knowing whose they were, but

only knew who left us there, and we could not consistently recognize any orders except from those under whose instructions we were acting. My reasoning had no effect whatever and they decided to take the goods from us. I said, 'We have been here all winter, eating poor beef and rawhide to take care of these goods. We have had but little fun, and would just as soon have some now as not, in fact would like a little row. If you think you can take the fort, just try it. But I don't think you can take me to commence with; and the first one who offers any violence to me is a dead man. Now I dare you to go past me towards the fort.' My bluff stuck and after this we had no more trouble.

"The wagons being sent out for the goods soon began to arrive. Provisions were not in question now as we had plenty. There was also a big Y. X. company going down to stock the road and a company of elders traveling with hand-carts came through from Salt Lake City. It was about one week from the first arrival until the last of these arrived.

"There were over 200 teams now on the ground, many of the owners beginning to get impatient at the delay. I was at a loss what to do, so I went out after night and asked the Lord to help me out. I told Him I desired to do exactly what was best, but did not know a thing about it, and made this proposition: that I would take my clerk with me in the morning, and when a question was asked me by any one what to do, I would tell the clerk to write down just what first came to my mind. And if that was right to please remove the spirit of oppression that I was laboring under and allow me to go back to the fort and enjoy myself with my friends. My mind was at once entirely relieved. I went and passed a pleasant evening. Next morning without saying anything about the lack of instructions we commenced business. Soon some asked whose teams were to be loaded first, and I dictated to my clerk. Thus we continued. As fast as the clerk put them down orders would be given and we passed on to the next. We continued this four days. Everything that I felt to be my duty was done. All the teams were loaded up, companies organized and started back, men detailed to remain a while longer, elders furnished flour, and a great deal of business was done. A memorandum was kept of all of this.

"I hitched up a team and started for home when everything was in shape. I reached Salt Lake City a few hours ahead of the freight teams, and went to President Young's office. He was very glad to see me, expressing much sympathy and saying that if he had known of our suffering in time he would have sent supplies at any cost.

"When I left Devil's Gate for Salt Lake City, it was with the understanding that I was to return there and take charge of the place as a Y. X. station agent, but I had had enough of Devil's Gate and never returned."

Devil's Gate must have seemed appropriately named to these and the thousands of other poor people who passed over the Trail. By the time they reached this place away out on the plains it surely must have seemed like the Gate of Hell to them. Those who pass there now, however, could hardly imagine that so much suffering and death could have occurred unless by pestilence or massacre.

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